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Aaron Lapwing's Genius

Or, For the Princess Herodias

By Leonard Britten

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CHAPTER I.

RODDY GETS AN ASSIGNMENT.

"MR. NICHOLSON!" said the city editor.

Roddy Nicholson approached the desk, and the city editor selected a newspaper clipping out of a miscellany of scraps and cuttings which lay before him.

"I want you to go up to the Chesterfield and get an interview with Prince Herod or else with Prince Hassan, or maybe with both of them," said the city editor. "I don't want to publish the interview, because every paper has been running that stuff until the public has grown tired of it. Old feudal despot, beautiful princess, rival Mohammedan ruler in the same hotel, is not the line I want you to take, Mr. Nicholson. Read this and see if you don't get the germ of a new story out of it."

Roddy took the clipping and scanned it carefully before handing it back.

"I read that this morning," he answered. "It don't see much new in it, except that it mentions Aaron Lapwing."

"What in thunder do you suppose Aaron Lapwing is doing with Prince Herod of the Malissori?" inquired the city editor. "He has taken him under his wing, sees his visitors, pays his bills, and escorts the Princess when she goes shopping. Why?"

"I suppose Prince Herod has given him a concession for gold or something of the sort, in Albania," answered Roddy.

"No!" said the city editor. "There isn't any gold in Albania. There isn't anything but stones. Sit down a minute, Nicholson. Review the situation.

"Prince Herod, leader of the Christian branch of the Malissori tribesmen, the most powerful clan in Albania, comes to America with his beautiful daughter and pays a visit to Washington, to protest against the latest German princeling that the Powers have put on the Albanian throne. Washington sends him away empty-handed, of course, because it isn't our business, and we don't care a Lincoln penny about the affairs of Albania.

"Prince Hassan, head of the Mohammedan Malissori, and Herod's hereditary enemy for five or six hundred years, comes over also on his private yacht to urge Washington to support this Prince Witmar, or whoever he is, that the Powers have placed over him. Actually, he dogs Prince Herod's footsteps to see what he is doing, and follows him round from place to place, as though he were a detective.

"There you have the situation, and a simple one. Prince Herod, Christian clan leader, in revolt against the new ruler, and Prince Hassan, Mohammedan, and pro-Austrian. Herod has a beautiful daughter. Naturally the newspapers have made yards of copy out of it all. But the last person who seems to have

ing status in the matter is Aaron Lapwing.

"Now, you know Lapwing as well as I do. He's the universal genius of America. Everything he does is new of the first order. Broke himself five times over grand opera in English; got out five million ahead on a fake wheat corner, put the money into an outfit for signaling Mars and went bankrupt over it; started the International Educational Film Company and made another fortune out of that; threw away three millions to smash Consolidated Gas and is cheating him out of five hundred dollars—that's Aaron Lapwing. Now, if that fellow has got hold of Prince Herod, it isn't a simple gold concession. He's got one of his signalling, spreading schemes in his mind, and there's a story in it.

"Another point, Nicholson. Lapwing and the Chesterfields, as you know, he is going to pull it down to make a beer-garden and skating-rink, or something of that kind, and he has put all his guests out except the two princes. Now, why should he allow Hassan to stay? He's watching Herod, if he and Herod are thicker than two thieves together.

"There's Herod and his daughter and their followers on one floor, and Hassan, with his bosom friend and prime minister, Lord Ronald Sutcliffe, on the floor beneath. There's Lapwing in the office and there isn't a newspaper has connected up these links, as I haven't. But we're going to. Just run up there, Nicholson, and see what there is to be seen, only take care not to approach Lapwing direct, or he'll convince you with a dose of the cure that he knows how to tell. Nose around until you've got hold of the facts, and write a thundering good story, as long as you please, about them."

Roddy went back to his desk and put on his hat. Two more nearby men watched the young man's spare, muscular figure enviously. Roddy was the best-known man in the room. All the confidences that passed between the evening switchboard operator and the morning switchboard operator got down to Roddy anything. He would have been disgusted if anybody had told him so.

"I wish I had half Roddy's money," sighed Tom Halloran, rewrite man. "What does a man with his load want to work for, and leave some other fellow out of a job?"

If that question had been put to Roddy, he would hardly have known how to answer it. His uncle, "Pat" Nicholson, who had adopted him as a child, was a small orphan, had died the year before, when Roddy left college, and had bequeathed him the entire fortune of three hundred dollars. Roddy had gone into a newspaper office because he had a dim idea that he ought to earn his own living, and he imagined that there was a spice of romance in the work.

By that time he discovered that there was not, he had the habit. He made only a fairly average reporter. He was the second assistant to his job, but he would never rise to anything higher. He was worth about twenty-five dollars a week. Of that he saved and begun to suspect life.

He made his way uptown to the Chesterfield, one of the old landmarks of the city. In its day, it had been a fashionable hotel, but Aaron Lapwing, who was said to have pressured it for the purpose of dismissing the head waiter, who had lost his temper arrogantly, had decided to pull it down and put up his amusement palace in its place.

As it stood on Beacon Square, among a population which would have been incapable of appreciating the Chesterfield in its most prosperous days, which it scorned the dilapidated, shabby old place, this decision was probably a wise one—one of the few gleams of common sense that shone through fantastic dreams of the eccentric Mars signaler.

"I scarcely thought brought Herod and his daughter here!" Roddy soliloquized, as, having descended from the cab, he stood gazing up at the dilapidated old structure.

It seemed a queer place in which to house the two rival princes, the one an invited, and the other a self-invited guest, when it was all ready for demolishing and the remaining tenants had been ordered to take their departure, and had obeyed, as a flood along the corner of a street and Second avenue, with yawning lots on the two other sides which seemed to produce rank grass and crumbling bricks in equal proportion." The awnings that fluttered above the windows were old and faded, and the workmen had already begun to erect some scaffolding at the rear.

"I wonder which is the Princess's room?" mused Roddy, looking up at the rows of faded awnings that flapped lazily in the afternoon breeze.

He must have uttered this question aloud, for a tallish man in a frock coat and silk hat, who was apparently about to emerge from the door of the hotel, stopped and looked at him keenly.

Roddy was aware of the look of interrogation upon the stranger's face, looked back at him. The man might have been about five years older than himself—say thirty. He had a clean-shaven jowl and the thin lips of an ascetic; his eyes were bright and penetrating, and they locked into Roddy's with a direct challenge. Then they turned upward toward the awnings also.

At that moment something fluttering at a window on the fourth floor attracted Roddy's attention. It seemed like a loose, muslin curtain at first; then Roddy perceived that it was an intricate headpiece, whose loosened veil flew out into the wind, disclosing the dark hair and oval face of a girl of singular beauty.

This was undoubtedly the Princess Herodias, daughter of the old robber chief who had come to America with the purpose, childish in its futility, of interceding the workings of European diplomacy. Roddy had read the descriptions of her; her beauty, her hauteur, the striking native dress she wore, the veil that was never lifted.

Crowds had followed her and Lapwing through the department stores, in which she purchased, wholesale, articles that are usually sold by the ounce or foot.

Roddy had read, too, of her father's hopeless endeavor to raise a paltry loan of a hundred thousand dollars to put the finances of his tribal territory in order.

"That's how Lapwing got into the game, of course!" he exclaimed involuntarily.

The girl at the fourth floor window had evidently heard him, in spite of the noise made by the workmen, for when Roddy saw her start at the word "Lapwing." She leaned out of the window, scrutinizing both Roddy and the ascetic stranger, who was now confronting Roddy with a stare that was unmistakably both a challenge and a demand.

Roddy saw her brows contract. A storm of anger seemed to sweep over the beautiful face. But it was not directed to him. It was undoubtedly directed at the stranger, who, ignorant of what was passing above his head, continued to fix his eyes fixed on Roddy.

The girl turned disdained. The open window became singularly blank and uninteresting to Roddy now. Still he stared upward, in the hope that she would reappear.

"Can I be of any assistance to you?" inquired the stranger, politely.

"Not at present, thanks," answered Roddy. "When you can I'll let you know."

"You seem unusually interested in this hotel," the other persisted.

Roddy did not reply. It was not through disdain, but because he had seen the flutter of the headpiece again. Now he saw the girl behind the window once more, but cautiously, as though she was anxious that her movement should not be seen from the street. She perceived Roddy, and hesitated, finger on lip. No, it might have been a coincidence, but Roddy could have sworn that the gesture was meant to be a signal for silence.

The girl's hand drew near to the window and rested upon the sill. The slender fingers were clasping something square and red—in fact, brick-colored.

"If there is anything you want, perhaps I can get it for you," persisted the ascetic man.

Crash!

The face at the window had disappeared. Roddy had seen an uplifted arm, an arm of remarkable beauty, tapering at the wrist into a hand of almost fairy imaginable, so far as could be discerned at that distance. The hand was the last thing to disappear, and it was there in a gesture which is universally interpreted as, finality.

Something had been flung from the window. It had struck the ascetic stranger's silk hat and knocked it off from his head into the gutter, a shapeless thing that would never grace any man's head again. It was utterly beyond renovation, and the ascetic man looked at it in rueful acknowledgment of this fact.

Inside the broken spheroid of felt and silk lay half a brickbat.

CHAPTER II.

AN APARTMENT-FEUD.

"YOU were saying," inquired Roddy of the ascetic stranger "you wanted to get something, were you not?"

"Look here, do you want anybody in this hotel, or are you merely a passer-by?" the other blurted out. "If you're a reporter——"

"You've got me now," Roddy answered. "I want to see either Prince Herod or Prince Herodias. Judging from the young lady's well-directed aim," I have a fancy that the person I am going to see will be Prince Herodias."

"Confound that little devil!" exclaimed the other. "Where are you from? Oh, yes! Well, I'm Lord Sutcliffe, and if you want to interview his highness, I'll take you up there. I thought you might be one of those confounded tradesmen's touts, you know. However, there's isn't anything new to add to what you know. Prince Herod's mission to Washington was a rank failure, as every one knew it must be, and he's going back discredited and broken. You see—but come inside and sit down a moment."

Inside the hotel, a seated upon a battered and dilapidated hall lounge, that looked more like an advertisement for a depilatory, Lord Sutcliffe handed Roddy his card.

"You see, it's this way," he said. "His highness, Prince Herod, has been pretty well—er—written off. I think you call it. All the newspapers have published his photograph and a lot of stuff about his mountain tribe, and his ancestral customs, and his supposed quest of a bride. But all that, and his highness doesn't like it. He is an Oxford man, and he is doing his best to modify his appearance. He wants to have a presentation of his case against that old ruffian, Prince Herod.

"Now, Herodias is the worst scoundrel unhanged. Swaggers around in knee-petticoats with silver daggers stuck in them, and is trying to sell his soul for a hundred thousand dollars. He's an absolute savage, and so is Herodias. She's a wild cat, they keep a nanny-goat in the bathroom, and she has the tub filled with bricks to throw at the cook. Herod and Herodias and their she has a sacred mission to carry on the tribal warfare here in New York.

"Now, that incendiary, Lapwing, who has offered Herod a sum of money in return for some concession or other, which Herod did not like to hint, because the Malissori won't let him work it, gave them the floor above us, so that Herodias could annoy us. And the worst is, we can't leave. We simply have to stick to the old wretch to find out what tricks he is meaning.

"However, now that Prince Herod's absurd mission has failed, he'll be off any day. His highness on the high horse is it will be a bad day for him. I wish, Mr.—er—thank you—Nicholson, that you would call on his highness and tell him proper flight. Here is his highness, an Oxford man, classed on a par with that degraded ruffian Herodias, who is digging his best to make the Mohammedan Malissori an enlightened people. Why, he has invented a cabinet for them! Can't you cut out the scenic descriptions and write a really good article?"

Roddy sighed pathetically. He could, but he didn't want to get out of newspaper work just then.

"And now we'll go up to his highness's room and have a chat together.

Which was being out of order, they went up stairs, the upper flights of which had already been uncarpeted, and stopped at the third floor. At the sound of their footsteps on the bare boards a door opened and a shortish, thick-set man, with bushy face and by no means unpleasing countenance, looked out apprehensively.

But before they could approach each other an older man came hastily down from the fourth story. He was about sixty years of age, he wore his native Albanian dress of tight-fitting waistcoat and loose, white trousers, and in the flaming sash round his waist were silver daggers and jeweled pistols. Upon his head was a red skull-cap, set jauntily aside.

As the Prince went past he scowled at Hassan with an expression of such venomous hatred as seemed unnatural to Roddy. Either this was the very acme of silent vituperation, or else it was over-acting. However, the thought went through his head in a moment, and then he was being ushered by Prince Hassan into the tastefully decorated apartment, and the door was closed.

"Mr. Nicholson is a reporter," explained Lord Sutcliffe.

"Oh, yes!" said the Prince. "Look here, I say, what is it you are going to write about at this time? They had photographs of my harem last week——"

"His highness is unmarried," explained Lord Sutcliffe.

"What I want to find out," said Roddy frankly, "is what Mr. Aaron Lapwing is doing in the company of Prince Herod."

"He's handing him a hundred thousand dollars," said Prince Hassan bitterly, leaning back on the divan against the flamboyant wallpaper. "The old scoundrel has made him think there is gold in his hills, and that money will go into his own pocket. Whilst you know who only ask to be left alone in peace."

"Put that in your paper, Mr. Nicholson," Lord Sutcliffe said. "That's the Mohammedan Malissori are being persecuted because they favor Austrian supremacy in the Balkans. They are really Malissori, you know, who have always been an orderly and law-abiding people. They don't like Prince Herod's rule, nothing more, and it is through them that a hundred miles of Albanian territory remains in comparative darkest Africa. Why, many of those people are still in the age of bows and arrows, and have never progressed beyond the fifteenth century. Now, we are the progressive Malissori party, and they keep a permanent prince we expect to move fast—now—"

The Prince's exclamation was accompanied by a movement quick enough for any Malissori as he leaped from the divan. A long, glistening, steeling streak strained, split the wallpaper, and trickled down upon the divan.

Each of the princes looked at it in consternation, and Prince Hassan rubbed the back of his neck in a very intimate manner.

"Bolling oil!" exclaimed Roddy.

"Bolling castor oil!" corrected Lord Sutcliffe. "How on earth——"

The heavy pressure of the fluid was dripping from a tiny round hole that had been neatly bored at the ceiling over the door. Evidently the borer had worked patiently through the beams above, with the sole purpose of squirting the boiling oil in a steaming mixture upon the spot where Prince Hassan was wont to sit.

"It's the fiend of a Herodias!" shouted the Prince. "No kind of persecution is too petty for her. She spent all yesterday leaning out of the window and shooting peas into mine below. I found the floor covered with them when I came in. She's a fiend, Nicholson—a fiend. They made a horrid mess."

"This young woman is the most devilish young person I have ever met—or encountered," observed Lord Sutcliffe. "They've tamed these Malissori. They're the sweetest people, and was educated entirely by an English governess, too, like several of the Balkan princesses. A veneer of civilization, and the manners of a Hottentot beneath it."

"I say, Sutcliffe, go and complain to the management again," said Prince Hassan.

"Much good that will do," answered Lord Sutcliffe; but he went obediently. While the Prince, selecting a chair this time, and waistcoat of the ceiling carefully before sitting down, offered Roddy his cigar case.

"Sutcliffe's a queer chap," the Prince observed. "He's half Austrian, you know."

"I didn't know," answered Roddy.

"Yes, his mother was the Baroness Prevecsa. Old family, and has a castle forty miles from Albanian border; but the district has been in revolt for the past twenty years, and it would take an army to occupy it. Sutcliffe was born at Oxford with me. He had an idea of recovering his estate, but he found he couldn't get through the Malissori district. You don't wonder he hates these savages. If we can get the Powers to support Prince Ferdinand of Coburg-Coburg, our new king, with an adequate force, we'll go ahead quickly; but as soon as that old ruffian Herod gets back he'll raise Cain again——hello!"

He sprang from his chair with the same expression of consternation on his face that he had displayed when Roddy first saw him.

The cause was not far to seek. Lord Sutcliffe was walking along the corridor at an unusually active pace, and after him, a mass of clinging garments and flimsy laces, her hood disarranged, so that all could see the irate, beautiful face beneath it, came the Princess Herodias, striking at him with her bare fists, but not making very much impression on his broad back.

"Now, Princess Herodias!" remonstrated Sutcliffe, turning upon his tormentor at the door.

"I'll teach you to make complaints about me to a man!" cried the Princess in furious accents. "You called me a

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fiend. You called me a Hottentot!"

"No, Hottentot, Princess, come, now," urged Sutcliffe.

"I tell you, you did. I had my ear to the door. Take that!"

She rapped him across the face with her fingers in a way that showed ample experience with the act, and then, catching sight of Roddy, ran to him and clung to him, as if for protection. At the head of the stairs appeared the faces of two or three of the native costume, evidently Prince Herod's retainers.

There were three or four red streaks across Lord Sutcliffe's face. His eyes blazed with anger and he caught the Princess by the wrists. Then Roddy's fingers closed around the other man's arms.

"Come, Lord Sutcliffe, that is no way to treat a lady!" he protested.

"You call that vixen a lady!" shouted Sutcliffe. "She's——"

"Best not say more," said Roddy soothingly, seeing the dark, smiling face of Prince Hassan in the doorway. "Come, Princess Herodia, you are a little upset. Let me escort you back to your apartments."

For a moment the girl looked keenly at him, and then, throwing her arms about his neck, she burst into indignant tears. It was quite a half minute before Roddy could succeed in disengaging her. The Princess was certainly the most bewildering proposition that he had ever encountered.

At last she took his arm and suffered him to lead her upstairs. Glancing back, Roddy saw Prince Hassan still smiling, and Sutcliffe watching him with an expression of the utmost malignancy. It almost seemed to Roddy that Sutcliffe was jealous of him. But how could he be jealous if he and the Princess were at daggers drawn?

They entered the apartment on the fourth floor. It was almost bare of furniture, but gigantic bales of rugs, new trunks, suitcases, rolls of material, packages in enormous number littered the floor. The Princess turned to Roddy.

"You are my champion," she said. "Tell me, what is your name?"

"Roddy Nicholson," he answered. "Roderick, in fact, but nobody calls me that."

The Princess disengaged the muslin veil from her head and wound it about Roddy's arm, tying it in a graceful, looping bow.

"You shall wear that for me forever," she said. "Now may it leave your arm henceforward, as long as you live. And you may kiss me."

Now, at twenty-five, most men have both kissed and been kissed, but for the moment the plain bluntness of the proposition staggered Roddy. Then he advanced his lips toward the beautiful face beside him, a little gingerly, but not as though he were going to kiss a cobra.

To his astonishment the Princess, raising her hand, struck him across the face. It was a light blow, and half playful, but it killed all the kissing inspiration for the moment.

"You were going to kiss my face!" gasped the Princess in horror.

"But that's where we always kiss," Roddy explained.

The Princess's eyes softened. "You are a very unusual people in America, I see," she answered. "There!"

And, extending her hand in a gracious manner, she indicated the exact spot, at the juncture of wrist and forearm, on which Roddy was to deposit the tribute of his lips.

Then, being as good a newspaper man as he knew how, Roddy inquired for Aaron Lapwing.

"He is anywhere on this floor, is he?" he asked.

"No, he has gone out with my father," she replied.

"And the nanny-goat?" he inquired, remembering that this incident had not been wiped up.

"The what?"

"That goat that you keep in the bathroom to get milk, Princess Hassan—no. Lord Sutcliffe—said you kept a goat—"

She stamped her foot. "Come here!" she cried, and, catching Roddy by the hand, led him into the bathroom of the suite. "Where is that goat? Is it not here?" she demanded, waving her hand dramatically about the little room. "They are trying to deprive me of the rest of my public against us, by pretending that we are savages. "It is they who are savages, not we! Modesty, indeed! They lie! Where is your goat? Look and find it!"

There was certainly no goat in the bathroom. There was, however, a heap of brass bricks in the tube, and a kettle of respectable size, simmering on an alcohol stove, gave forth an odor of boiling cocoa. Also there was a rather large gimlet, one of the largest that Roddy had ever seen. Looking out through the door, Roddy could see the little interior court of the hotel, and, near the window, the place where the redoubtable Lapwing had patiently bored through the planking. Beside this was a huge dumbbell, much too large for any one but a professional strong man to use; but two shiny grooves along the boards indicated that it had probably been rolled to and fro, and Roddy surmised that Prince Hassan's uneasy couch was underneath.

"Well, am I a lady, or am I an ignorant savage?" inquired the Princess petulantly.

"You are a perfect lady, Princess," answered Roddy gravely.

"Then you may kiss me again," she answered, extending her wrist toward him.

Holding her little hand in his, Roddy was conscious of a ridiculous desire to pull the beautiful, childish girl toward him and kiss her mouth, which looked very red and curved and inviting. It is probable that the Princess read his irresolution in his eyes, for an uncontrollable look came into hers, and in another moment——

But Roddy did not even kiss her wrist. For at that moment wild cries of "Fire!" broke out from the court below.

Looking through the door of the bathroom, Roddy perceived that the apartment was filled with a dense cloud of smoke.

"Now, Princess!"

CHAPTER III.

TELEPHONING UNDER DIFFICULTIES.

CATCHING the Princess in his arms, he hurried her toward the window and locked out. The fire had started with amazing swiftness. It was evidently in the second story, but, even as Roddy watched, he saw the dense smoke interspersed with sparks of fire, and an instant later, with a roar, the conflagration took hold, and a sheet of flames shot upward.

The Princess lay perfectly quiet in Roddy's arms, but her own were clasped tightly about his neck. She was as light as a featherweight; she seemed all flowing draperies and floating muslin.

Roddy folded her in these garments until she was completely enshrouded, like an incipient butterfly in its silken cocoon. Then he staggered out through the smoke upon the balcony.

Thank heaven, a fire escape led down into the court. And now he perceived that the conflagration was not immediately below, but at the far end of the second story. The wind had blown the smoke in his direction. But the flames were roaring and crackling and mounting higher.

Down in the court Roddy could see Lord Sutcliffe, Prince Hassan and a motley crew of hotel servants and Mohammedan retainers. They shouted up to him. Three of Prince Herod's native servants came bursting into the Princess's apartment, saw her lying in Roddy's arms, and hesitated.

"Get down the fire escape, and I will follow with the Princess!" Roddy shouted to them.

They understood his gesture, if not his words, and obeyed. Then Roddy, carrying the Princess, descended the rusty iron stairs. A few moments later he was safe in the court below, and set the Princess on her feet.

Her first act was to loosen the rolled-up draperies, which prevented her from walking; her second to fling the veil over her face.

At that moment Roddy could have sworn that he saw the face of Aaron Lapwing in a ground-floor room, at right angles to the side of the hotel that was burning. He was not a dozen feet distant, and he was peering through a narrow slit of light at the bottom of the drawn blind. He was not in the least perturbed, but was watching Roddy and the Princess with an expression of intense interest. Roddy could see nothing but his face, and a moment later the smoke shrouded it.

Then the blaze began to subside as quickly as it had arisen. It was a tiny blaze to have made so much smoke, and the sudden upshoot of fire might have been due to some combustible that had burned itself out. There was no sign of a fire company. A sudden suspicion of Lapwing crossed Roddy's mind. Had he intended to burn out either his guest or Prince Hassan, whom he had permitted to occupy the apartment below?

He looked irresolutely about him. The hotel employes had already almost extinguished the blaze with buckets of water. The dispossessed occupants were preparing to go back into their quarters. Nobody was paying the least attention to him. But everybody was giving Herodias a wide berth, except the retainers, who remained discreetly near her.

It was Roddy's job now to telephone to the editor. There was no story worth running so far, except that about the fire, but there were the makings of a big one. He must let him know. Then he must see Lapwing and question him.

Suddenly the Princess came striding up to him. The sheer veil which covered her face permitted him to see two eyes blazing with scorn. She pointed to his arm.

Roddy looked and understood. The outer veil, which she had arranged about his biceps and hidden him was there for the remainder of his days, lay, a soiled and dragged thing, in the courtyard.

Roddy picked it up and began to adjust it about his sleeve, but the Princess snatched it away, and, with a look of unutterable contempt, spoke a few words to the oldest of the retainers in her native tongue. Instantly, the man stepped between herself and Roddy, and the pair proceeded into the hotel.

"Confound it!" ejaculated Roddy, "did she expect me to go through the streets wearing that crazy bow?"

He looked after the Princess disconsolately. It was beginning to grow dark. He must see Lapwing, and then, perhaps, resume his talk with Prince Hassan and Lord Sutcliffe. Lapwing seemed to hold the key to the situation.

He started toward the hotel entrance, when he encountered the rotund figure of Aaron Lapwing himself, just emerging. The man was ruddy-cheeked and smiling.

"Ah, that was a gallant rescue, Mr.——. I know your face quite well," he began. "Newspaper man, ain't you? Don't be in such a hurry, though. I don't know what I would have done if anything had happened to the poor little Princess. Some fool threw a lighted match upon a floor, which had just been cleaned with benzine. Say, you don't need to say anything about it, do you, Mr.——"

"Nicholson," said Roddy. "Yes, I'm going to telephone in a short report. But I'll make it harmless. Where is the office?"

"Ah, our telephone is not in service," answered Lapwing. "The men removed the switchboard this afternoon. But I've just had a telephone booth installed in my new building round the corner. Come with me and I'll show you."

He took Roddy through the hotel and indicated a door in a side alley that ran for about a hundred feet, terminating in a dead wall of newly constructed scaffolding and timbers, covered with bills.

"You can walk right in," he said. "The door's open. I'll be here to tell you anything you want to know when you get back."

But as Roddy started away he came hurrying after him.

"I forgot; I'll have to unlock the booth for you," he said. "Those sneak thieves round here would break up a telephone for the sake of the copper wire, to say nothing of the paper in the book. I've got the key in my pocket."

He led him into a gaunt, unfurnished room in a new building which was in course of construction. Roddy remembered that Lapwing had acquired most of the property surrounding the Chesterfield, for the laying out of his new amusement palace and rounds. This building looked like the office.

As he took down the receiver from the hook, inside the booth, he heard a sharp click behind him. He sprang round, to see the door closed and Lapwing trying to open it.

"What's the matter?" cried Roddy.

Lapwing's tones came faintly through the plate glass: "I've broken the key in the lock."

He waved his hands in an expressive pantomime, which seemed to indicate that he would have to bring a locksmith. Then he went away.

Roddy tugged at the door, without moving it in the least. The lock was evidently of the strongest kind, and it seemed remarkable that Lapwing should have taken such precautions against possible intrusion on the part of thieves. Still, the neighborhood was admittedly a tough one.

It looked as though there was to be fifteen or twenty minutes of waiting. Roddy put the receiver to his ear and waited for the central call. But there came no call, nor any answer to his own.

There was not even that distracting blend of voices and conversation that shows one is, at least, in some sort of touch with one's fellow-beings.

Then suspicion began to enter Roddy's mind. Could it be possible that Aaron Lapwing had set that fire for some base purpose, and had trapped him in the booth so that he should not telephone the news until the deed accomplished his purpose? It seemed incredible, but then everything that Lapwing did was incredible.

And could one not suffocate in a closed telephone booth? The atmosphere was certainly becoming more and more stuffy as the minutes passed. And that lock story was astonishingly improbable.

Roddy took out his watch. "I'll give him fifteen minutes more," he said to himself.

The hands seemed to move more and more slowly, and the air had become so foul that he developed symptoms of oxygen. Roddy felt himself growing sleepy; the poisonous atmosphere was stifling. Roddy's desire to telephone was beginning to leave him. Still he waited.

He could see, through the glass door, the radius lights in the side alley. It had grown almost dark. Roddy stared out through the panes in a brave hope that Lapwing would desire to be released at his watch. The time that he had allowed himself had passed. He shouted.

He did not think that his wheedling cries could be heard in the alley, but nobody came. He hammered on the plate glass. He sighed for a hatchet. He took up a stone wall. He tried to smash the panes, but he had to desist when his knuckles were skinned and bleeding.

He butted the door with his shoulders—pretty powerful ones that had done yeoman work on the football team. The shoulder nerves telegraphed an infuriated message of protest to Roddy's brain, and the brain sent it back in the form of agony.

He twisted the receiver from its wires

(Continued on page seventeen.)

America's Secret War

Or, International Intrigue

By Marquis James

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CHAPTER IX.

'TWIXT LOVE AND DUTY.

MARJORIE'S agitation increased as she walked across the parade ground toward the quarters occupied by her and her father. Twice Guthrie had begun a sentence of the most important of all, and each time something intervened before he could finish it. This thought troubled her. Was she being made the innocent party to a vile conspiracy? She had heard of such things in the army.

In her room she recovered the papers taken from Guthrie's saddle. She had hidden them in the bottom of her trunk along with some keepsakes which belonged to her mother, whom she had never seen. She spread them out upon her bed and was soon lost in study. Presently she thought she heard a noise just outside her door. She did not. The noise ceased. Then she heard it again. She tiptoed to the door and suddenly threw it open.

Outside stood Sato, the Japanese servant. She scrutinized his face. It broke into the inevitable smile.

"I came to inquire," said he, "whether the young mistress would like roast beef or broiled dinner."

"Sato, how thoughtful you are," returned the girl, much relieved. "Really you gave me an awful start, at first. Tell Hannah to fry some chicken, if you will."

Marjorie noticed that Sato was no longer looking at her. He was peering through the doorway and at the bed upon which she had spread Guthrie's papers. She closed the door hastily and resumed her perusal of the documents. Several of the papers were in a cipher which she could not read. But the one which contained her instructions was not. It ran as follows:

"On the night of the 28th, take document B6881—the same being your credentials—and go as instructed. Between the hours of eight and nine o'clock, walk north from the post by the highway known as Joaquin road. When a half a mile from the farthest buildings in the post, another road intersects the first. At the northwest corner of the intersection is a guide post. It is painted white, and the timbers are studded and lined with heavy iron. Start counting from the top down, locate the third bolt. Press the bolt twice in the manner of an electric bell button. Then, counting from the bottom up, locate the seventh bolt, and press it once. Then, counting from left to right across the post, repress the fifth bolt once. Then look behind the post. There you will see, are in reality keys to a combination door, which will open. In the compartment to which it leads you will find an epitome of the report of your predecessor. It may seem unintelligible at first. Later developments will make its meaning clear. Likewise, it will contain directions for the next step of your activity. These will make your future course for the time being, quite plain. Deposit B6881 in the drawer, and press the third bolt from the center post. Then withdraw, and the secret chamber will close."

The paper bore no signature.

Marjorie left the room that evening in silence. Several times her father had attempted to start a conversation but failed.

"I guess it's that young Lieutenant Guthrie that occupies my little girl's thoughts," the Colonel said at length.

"Well, daughter, he has proved himself a brave man. For all I know he is worthy of you. And, if you feel that way, said I want you to marry an army man."

"Marry! What is that you are saying, dad?" Marjorie responded. "Who has ever said anything about marrying?"

"No one has said anything," the Colonel replied. "Young girls don't usually open up the topic. But I wouldn't be surprised if the Lieutenant should say something pretty soon, unless matters change their present aspect. Why, it is the talk of the whole post, the time you spend over at the hospital."

"Well, why shouldn't I? Didn't Lieutenant Guthrie save my life?"

"I'm not saying a word, daughter. Pick your own husband. But pick him from the army."

"Dear old dad! You are so good and kind to me," Marjorie said, climbing into the veteran's lap when the meal was finished, as if she had been a child. "I couldn't love any man enough to leave you."

"Tut, tut, little girl," the Colonel responded, generously. "Don't feel that way about it. Of course, I will regret it to lose you, but all girls marry some day, and when you find the man you want, your old daddy will be the last man in the world to stand between you and your life's happiness."

Tears glistened in the eyes of Marjorie Sigbee as she turned and walked down the steps of the veranda to mount her horse, which Joe Tecumseh had made ready for her. The pangs of guilt stabbed her heart. She felt, when she set off on her secret, mysterious errand that she was betraying her own father. But the words of Guthrie, delivered on the desert when he thought he was to die, comforted her.

"In the direction of the military affairs of this Government," he had said, "there are many things none of us understand. We must not ask to understand. Such is my mission to Rosencrans. This is no reflection on the integrity or ability of your father. I swear by the one great God—the God of battles and of peace alike—that I speak the truth."

They are words spoken in the manner of an honorable soldier.

She arrived at the guide post and pressed the disguised buttons as directed. The secret drawer, operated by a hidden spring, slowly slid open. In the receptacle she found a roll of paper, closely folded. The girl took it out. She deposited document B6881 in its stead, pressed the designated button, and the drawer closed.

In her room, Marjorie unfolded the missive with feverish haste. The paper contained but one sentence—six words. But they were sufficiently cryptic and terrifying. This cryptic message seemed to stare at her from the paper upon which it was written:

WATCH SATO,
SIGBEE DOES NOT KNOW.

CHAPTER X.

THE STOLEN PLANS.

GENTLEMEN, grave considerations confront the Western division of the National Board of Strategy at this meeting," announced Colonel Sigbee to his officers in council assembled.

The Colonel looked very three days after the mysterious night pilgrimage Marjorie had taken to the guide post.

"The activities we have worked so hard against all these years seem to be at hand, despite our efforts." Colonel Sigbee continued this cryptic statement. "I regret the announcement I have to make. I have bent every individual effort to avert it, even to refusing to have deemed it a patriotic duty to shield from my fellow officers the real aspect of the situation. I have hoped that by means of our diplomatic channels we might be able to smooth things over. These efforts have failed. I feel that it would be a betrayal of my trust and my country to delay further, without putting the situation before you and asking you to sustain me and advise with me in the recommendation of courses that must follow."

The men Colonel Sigbee addressed were the picked officers of the army. They were accustomed to hearing things with stoic fortitude. But in this instance there were anxious faces among them. They hung forward in the chair words of their superior officer.

"Gentlemen, I need recall when we sent Sanders to Tahoto?"

"Yes, Colonel," said one of the officers nearest the speaker. "But do you mean——"

"I anticipate your remark, Captain Scott," the Colonel broke in. "You were going to ask whether or not our operative had failed in his mission."

"You are correct, Colonel."

"Well, he has not failed."

"Then it would appear to me that, with his errand successful, other difficulties could be adjusted with a little diplomatic pressure," a second officer broke in.

"Your surmise is incorrect, Major Carter," the Colonel said. "The disclosures made by Sanders, instead of opening an avenue for adjustment of matters by diplomacy, have shown us conclusively that diplomacy is out of the question."

"But other operatives had succeeded in his mission——"

"That is true. He succeeded in his real mission," failed in his ostensible mission," Colonel Sigbee replied. "His real mission I kept secret with myself. Gentlemen, I did this, not because I do not trust you with the secret, but because it was my hope and desire to spare my officers needless anxiety. I hoped against hope that things would turn out for the best."

"Colonel, do you mean——"

"Yes, Major. I withheld certain facts regarding Sanders' journey to the South Seas in a conscientious effort to spare my men the burden of responsibility of knowing in just what desperate straits this nation had become involved."

"Your motive was magnanimous, Colonel. But tell us the truth now."

"The whole truth?" the Colonel asked, scrutinizing the face of every man before him, and casting a searching glance at the sentries who stood at the doors of the room.

"Yes, the whole truth," responded Captain Scott, "and we pledge our lives and our sacred honor to uphold you in your course."

"Gentlemen," the Colonel replied in tense, grave tones, "it is war! War with Japan!"

For five minutes no one spoke. Veteran and aristocrat looked of the army sat and stared empty-eyed at one another and at their leader who stood before them. But the expression on each countenance was one of grim and absolute determination. The Colonel noted this, and knew his officers were with him. He knew they were with him, even in the attempt to carry out the most wild and reckless dating scheme ever conceived in the warfare of nations since history began.

"Gentlemen," the Colonel resumed at length, "the people of the United States are ignorant of this conflict. Even the government are ignorant; Congress and the Cabinet are ignorant; the army and the navy are ignorant. Even the President fails to appreciate its enormity and full significance.

"In brief the situation is this: The Japanese government has secretly annexed the island of Tahoto, which, as you know, lies just east of the Philippines. Tahoto is a little patch of earth, which has escaped the mad scramble of nations for territorial expansion and retained its independence. The present ruler of the island tasted the fatal fruit of the white man's civilization. Part French, he is the offspring of a shipwrecked French soldier into the native royal family. It has been his custom to slip away from his island sovereignty, and spend a part of each year in Paris, where he squanders financially there. The war in Europe came the French bankers had to have money. He went to Japan, and as ally of France in the war, was delegated to collect the debt.

"The Japanese saw their golden opportunity. Realizing the strategic importance of the island as a basis of attack upon the Philippines—which the Mikado has long coveted, as every one knows—Japan paid the debt from her own treasury, and accepted the island in lieu of it, through our secret man in Japan and sent Sanders there. He reports the Japs have a fortified naval base on the island, have secretly conveyed enough ammunition and guns there to equip an army. Upon a given signal they can capture the Philippines in sixty days, and intrench themselves so it would take two years and four hundred thousand men to get them out.

"Inasmuch as Japan has acted in secret in this matter, she is not ready at this moment one of the notable strategists of the Mikado's Government is on the island, directing the construction of the ammunition and the operation of the hidden wireless. I propose to land a half dozen brigades of infantry, seize the island, and seize by force the wireless station. That is a hostile act. It is war. Yet Japan, because she is not prepared to own the island, cannot make our invasion public. Ten picked men, directed by competent officers, which Sanders orders has forwarded me already, can dismantle the wireless and destroy the ammunition, and leave no evidence behind in the crater of an extinct volcano. The natives will think the explosion is an eruption, and to the world at large can pass off as that.

"The statistician now on the island is also directing Japan's espionage work in Germany in China. He is indispensable to the Mikado. We can capture him, hold him as a hostage, and force, instead, for the cession of the island to the United States as one of the Philippine group. This secret war can be accomplished now, if we are fortunate, without the loss of a man. Wait three months, and it will cost us tens of thousands of the flower of America's youth and millions in money."

The officers were aghast at the Colonel's enterprise. They discussed the matter for three hours from every point and angle. But the veteran's logic was sound. They formally pledged their support.

"And here are complete plans for our campaign. I brought them in this box just as they were sent by Sanders. Maps, diagrams, specifications—everything."

The Colonel spoke as he was opening the combination lock on the box. As he finished his speech the lid flew open.

The assembled officers saw the flushed face of their chief turn chalk white. Then it grew purple. Colonel Sigbee raised his hand to his throat and tore open his coat as one who is choking.

"Lost! Stolen! Treachery!" he gasped.

Two officers leaped to the Colonel's side, as he staggered and would have fallen had they not been prompt. The officers looked into the box. It was empty!

CHAPTER XI.

MYSTERIOUS DISAPPEARANCE.

MOST of the officers about the post were at the board meeting presided over by her father, and Marjorie was lonesome. She had not visited Guthrie since she had taken him the mysterious message she got at the guide post. Somehow, she felt an aversion toward him which she could not conquer.

"Watch Sato, Sigbee does not know." This message on the paper she had taken from the hidden repository seemed emblazoned in letters of eternal fire on the girl's mind. She could not escape it. Its mystifying significance terrorized her mind by day and haunted her dreams by night. She put every possible construction on the vague, yet ominous phrase. There was but one conclusion that presented itself to the girl's troubled mind. Conspiracy had crossed the threshold of her home. It had involved her own servant—she trusted Sato, five years in their employ. Then there was that hideous intrigue directed against her father. At times, Marjorie thought it would drive her insane. Marjorie was determined to go to Guthrie and inform him that she washed her hands of it all.

"At noon he said he was going to sleep, and did not wish to be disturbed until after o'clock," the surgeon in charge told Marjorie, when she presented herself at the hospital and received permission to visit Lieutenant Guthrie.

"But I must see him at once," protested the girl.

The surgeon was firm.

"He is recuperating so rapidly," said the doctor, "that he will be able to be up and about tomorrow, I hope. That is, if his rest is not broken."

But Marjorie was persistent. She must see him, she told herself and so she set about using her woman's wiles upon the kind surgeon. The effort was unstated, just as men usually do before a pretty and winsome girl.

"Here is the pass key," he said. "Go quietly, and if he is asleep I would advise you not to waken him. It will be better for him. I will see that he sleeps will be out."

Marjorie took the key, mounted a flight of stairs and made her way down along the long corridor to Guthrie's room.

She turned the key softly in the lock so as not to disturb the sleeper. But for all her gentleness, her manner was determined, and her mind was made up. She would have no more of it. Her participation in Guthrie's schemes was at an end, no matter what the latter could not deceive her father any longer. She pushed the door open easily and fitted head first into the room, brought a rush of hospital attendants. One arrived just in time to catch Marjorie as she swooned and fell. Guthrie's bed was uninhabited. Bed-clothes knotted into a rope, tied to his couch and thrown out of the window betrayed his avenue of escape.

The wrappings of a hastily opened package were strewn about the floor.

"That parcel came by mail this morning," said an attendant. "It was postmarked Los Angeles. Declared it contained clothes, sent expressly for him to wear when he effected his escape."

CHAPTER XII.

THE PLOT THICKENS.

THE news of Guthrie's flight from the hospital spread quickly through the post. Marjorie, terrified as she was, did not suspect the true significance of his precipitous disappearance. For she knew nothing of the missing plans.

The officers entertained no doubt as to his guilt. Colonel Sigbee quickly dispatched men in every direction to scour the country. But with orders to bring back this man, who had posed as an officer of the United States army, dead or alive.

Returning to her room, Marjorie went straight to her room, threw herself down upon her couch and wept long and bitterly. She was ignorant of the fact that Guthrie was being hunted through her father's direction and made up her mind to flee. She arose, took from her trunk his secret papers. She thought perhaps she could get a clew from them.

In the perusal of the papers, however, she saw something she had overlooked the first time. She was to make a second journey to the cave of the guide post. Luckily she read the papers when she did, for this was the day set for the trip. She would be away from the hill-ing-place. In the clump of woods to the right of the post, and just off the road, she would find a horse. "Use the same enterprise as yourself," as the document stated. According to directions this man would "carry instructions as to further duty and procedure."

As Marjorie read these lines her anxiety-ridden brain gave birth to a startling idea. There was a possibility that this man would be Guthrie himself. At any rate he would be an accomplice in the vile conspiracy into which she had been entrapped so unsuspectingly. Therefore, she reasoned, she could go home to

and make this man her prisoner. If he resisted, she would shoot him. Marjorie was desperate—even unto death.

Before she mounted her horse she carefully inspected her automatic and placed it in the belt of her riding skirt in position where she could draw it in an instant. Marjorie was a crack shot. Once the weapon was drawn and the touch of her finger on the hair-spring trigger, red death, in the form of a leaden bullet, would leap from the gun into the heart of any who should oppose her.

The moon was full again. It was nine o'clock when Marjorie passed the last sentry on the outskirts of the post. She rode along the lonely road, absorbed in thought. She reached the sign post near where she was to meet the mysterious confederate to Guthrie's design. Lost in her meditations she rode on.

The sound of the clattering hoofs of a galloping horse from behind aroused her. She turned her mount only in time to have a broken arm, the sound one in a sling, seize her bridle.

Marjorie's hand went to her belt. She drew her gun, only to have it knocked from her hand to the ground.

"Quick, come with me," said the rider, "they will be upon us in a minute, and then all will be lost."

Marjorie's heart stopped still. She recognized the rider's voice.

Without another word the injured horseman led Marjorie's mount off the road, into a thicket of sagebrush, safe from the sight of any who might pass upon the highway.

The distant staccato of horses' hoofs down the road, already reached their ears. They became louder and louder. Marjorie's heart beat against her breast until she thought it would tear its way out.

Her captor drew his revolver.

"I never before have threatened a woman with violence," he said apologetically but sternly, "but this is a case of dire necessity. Those who approach are soldiers of your father's command. They are looking for me. I forbid you to make any outcry that would betray my whereabouts as they pass."

The man with his arm in the sling had spoken the truth, at least as to the identity of his pursuers. True, they were cavalrymen from Rosencrans. The girl recognized the voice of Lieutenant Richards calling out his command as they whirled by, little suspecting they were within two hundred feet of the man they were after.

"Roderick Wright, this is treachery, and you shall pay dearly for it," Marjorie flashed as the soldiers passed, and her captor put away his revolver.

"I am willing to pay dearly, as you say, for what I do," Wright responded. "I am willing to pay as any patriot who loves his country and serves it."

"I forbid you to mention the Stars and Stripes," Marjorie retorted. "You are a villain, a traitor. You are a conspirator with Guthrie."

"In one statement you are correct," Wright responded. "I am a conspirator with Guthrie. But I am conspiring as directed at the saving of our country, and not the destroying of it. Contrary to your belief, I am working to protect your father, not to dishonor him."

"How quickly you change your roles, Roderick Wright," said Marjorie. "Last time we met I thought you were a romantic gentleman whose occupation was spending money a rich uncle had left you."

"What I said at that time was untrue. It was a falsehood of convenience forced upon me by the stress of circumstance!"

"Well spoken, indeed," said Marjorie contemptuously. "And doubtless what you are telling me now is, as you term it, a falsehood of convenience, but I shall not be deceived again. From your remarks I judge you are aware of Guthrie's escape, and are not surprised to meet me here."

"You are correct. I am aware of Guthrie's escape, if you please to call it that. And I will go so far as to say that I am the one who brought his flight about."

"Then you admit your treachery?"

"I admit the truth. And the truth in this instance is not a confession of treachery."

"Are you aware of the business that brought me to this spot?"

"I am not aware of what brought you to this spot," Wright responded. "I am aware of the business that would have taken you to the road intersection a mile beyond. I waited for you there by the roadside. The appointed hour passed, but you did not appear. I heard a horse pass. Presently I took a chance that it was you, and pursued. The unceremonious meeting resulted."

"Then you are the stranger I was to meet at the roadside, who is to give me instructions as to my further duty and procedure?"

"I am the same," Wright replied.

"Then why did you know I was the person you were to meet and not Guthrie?"

"I learned that from the Lieutenant himself. Didn't I just tell you that I helped him to escape? He has told me all—that is, all I did not know beforehand."

"But I thought you were in the hands of the Mexicans."

"I was for the time being, until I effected my escape—at the cost of a bullet through my arm, as you see here."

"And you know where Lieutenant Guthrie is?" Marjorie asked the question in an artless sort of way. She wanted to deceive Wright into believing idle curiosity was her motive. She wished to gain information to turn over to her father that he might locate this traitor. In this manner Marjorie thought she could undo some of the wrong she already had done by trusting this conspirator so blindly.

"Yes, I know where he is," Wright answered. "He is not far from here and, thanks to your care of him in the hospital, is resting right well after the fatigue of his escape."

"Will you take me to him?"

"It is kind indeed of you to ask," responded Wright. "I will tell him what

Her captor drew his revolver.

you said, and I know he will appreciate it. But for the time being he must remain alone. No one but myself must know his whereabouts now."

Marjorie dropped this line of questioning for fear her apparent sudden change of heart would arouse suspicions. She had located him approximately, she told herself, and with this clew she knew her father's officers could find him.

"And now to transact our business and be over with it," said Wright. "First, Miss Sigbee, I want to thank you for the service you have done to us and your country as well. You cannot realize what you have done now, but some day you will. Then, perhaps you will alter your opinion as regards myself and the Lieutenant."

Wright went on to explain that Marjorie's part in the enterprise was at an end, and requested her to turn over all the papers she had taken from Guthrie's saddle. Marjorie complied with this request willingly. She was eager to rid herself of the fateful documents. She did not intend to permit Guthrie and Wright to slip out of Uncle Sam by the surrender of the papers. She had another plan.

"And now, Miss Sigbee," Wright said, "I will take my leave. We may not meet for a long time, at least, and may never meet again. I would escort you back to the post, but for fear of my capture. Here is a letter from Lieutenant Guthrie. He charged me to give it to you."

Wright extended his hand. Marjorie hesitated a moment, and then took it. Wright clasped the girl's hand firmly, held it a moment, then turned, mounted his horse, and dashed out of the sagebrush and down the road.

Marjorie was on her horse in an instant. She rode cautiously out into the highway. She did not turn in the direction of the post. She followed Wright. She was determined to trace him to his hiding-place and learn his secret.

CHAPTER XIII.
CLEVER DECEIVERS.

MARJORIE guided her faithful mount, Streak, along on the soft earth by the side of the road. She kept out of the beaten highway in order that the hoof beats would not betray to Wright the fact that he was followed.

Wright let his horse out, and took down the road at full gallop. But Streak, true to his name, followed suit, and was so thrilled with the spirit of the race that Marjorie had to exert all her strength to hold him in check and keep him from getting so close to Wright that her presence would become known.

Wright followed the road for a mile or two, and then took an old trail which wound away into the hills. Marjorie followed, proceeding cautiously, as she was not familiar with this territory. The turns in the trail, however, assisted her to approach within a few hundred feet of Wright, as she thought, without being seen.

Presently she heard Wright's spurs clank as he dismounted. A light gleamed from the lonely cabin, discernible through the trees. She heard him halloo, and the voice which responded was that of Guthrie. Marjorie's heart beat wildly.

She cautiously guided Streak off into some brush near the trail, and listened intently. She dared not dismount, for she knew not what moment a rustling of the brush would betray her presence, and she would have to resort to flight. In flight she felt comparatively safe. She knew Streak could outdistance any horse in the surrounding country.

"Well, what luck?" she heard Guthrie ask, after the two had exchanged a few words which she did not understand.

"I met the Colonel's daughter, and, as you said, she is a girl that would do credit to a valiant soldier like her father."

"Poor girl," Guthrie replied, "I rebel at the deception we are forced to practice toward her. She takes me for a villain, and I know it. It goes hard on a fellow like me to let the truth be known, I care a great deal for the winsome Marjorie."

"And I am your sworn rival for her affections, as I already have told you," Wright responded. "Indeed I was pressing my suit in a very ardent fashion when interrupted by Estopinal's ambush and attack. She used some embarrassing personal questions about me, which I could not readily answer without betraying my identity and our plans. I made up the story about spending my uncle's money which I thought most plausible, and then encountered Estopinal, who knew me, and that spoiled everything."

"I am in the same boat exactly," Marjorie heard Guthrie say. "A man can't ask a girl to marry him, at least without telling her his right name, and that's my predicament. If I wasn't a soldier, and under orders, I would rebel at the whole business. Miss Sigbee thinks I am the sworn enemy of her father. Yet I am powerless to tell her otherwise. My lips are sealed by orders. I have saved the girl's life once, at the risk of my own life, and I would readily do it again. It is hard for me, a victim of circumstance, to bear the thought that she thinks me a criminal."

Marjorie listened to such discourse as this for half an hour, and then rode away back toward the post, her heart filled with conflicting emotions. She had heard these men whom she believed to be arch-villains, talking among themselves in secret. She turned their remarks over and over in her mind. She could not make up herself as she had been. She feared to disclose them whereabouts to her father, for she feared that her father's anger toward Guthrie would be misdirected, and that, after all, Guthrie and Wright were honorable men, engaged in some secret service which cast upon them the shadow of suspicion. Indeed, the more she thought, the more she looked upon them as martyrs.

Such is the penalty imposed upon innocent, trusting, truth-loving womanhood. For little did Marjorie suspect that Wright had been aware all along that she was following him. Little did she suspect that he had communicated this fact to Guthrie in a hurried whisper as soon as he had arrived at their hiding-place, and that the conversation which followed was concocted purposely for her ears in an attempt to reassure her. Marjorie did not know these things, and her lack of knowledge was to cause her many miserable days before she finally learned the truth regarding these two mysterious men—Roderick Wright and the man who called himself Lieutenant Ralph Guthrie.

When she reached the post, she tried to slip into her room unnoticed. But the ever vigilant Tecumseh was on guard. Her first tiptoed step in the hallway wakened him from his cot, upon which he always slept, fully dressed, just outside the rooms occupied by Marjorie and Colonel Sigbee.

"You have been out late again," the Indian observed, casting a searching glance at the girl.

"Yes," Marjorie said. "I have had a long ride through the moonlight." And with that she hastened to her room.

"Moon seems unusually attractive these nights," she heard the Indian observe as she closed the door.

Her first act was to read Guthrie's letter. Contrary to her suppositions, it was entirely personal and contained no hint of the secret oath he had exacted from her in the cottage. It was a finely written plea for her to trust him, even if she could not understand his actions. Guthrie was a master of honeyed words and phrases. This letter was a masterpiece. For whatever doubts still lingered in Marjorie's mind as she heard the long framed-up conversation in the woods, were dissipated when she read this letter.

Marjorie's sleep was untroubled that night. Guthrie had achieved his end. He had gained her confidence.

Next week's Ledger will contain further chapters of this remarkable story. You will miss a great deal if you do not read it to the end. We will give you constantly the very best stories of entertainment and romance we can buy, so send in your subscriptions and take the Ledger regularly, if you are not doing so. You will not regret it.

* * *

Two of a Kind.

In a certain Cincinnati theater the house physician receives a seat for each performance, but he is supposed to be on hand each evening.

Naturally, the plays sometimes pall on the doctor as he longs for a change—hence this story.

One evening a stage hand hastily ran to the doctor's seat in the aisle to the doctor's seat. He whispered into the ear of the occupant, "Hurry back at once, boss. Your wife's been taken with a fit—tack." The man in the seat followed the stage man somewhat reluctantly.

"Have you brought a pail of water, fainting lady, Doctor!" wailed one of the actresses, wringing her hands.

"Have you brought a bucketful—but in our excitement we forgot," the doctor remarked 'Not to be used except in case of fire.'"

"I fear you have made a fatal error," said the doctor. Then he scribbled something on a bit of paper. "Take this to the drug store to get a fill-up."

When the leading lady found herself alone with the doctor, she opened her eyes. "Doctor," she gasped, "you're a good fellow, aren't you? I know you are aware that there's nothing the matter with me. I'm as well as well, and I don't want to go on in this act. Can you fix it?"

"You bet I can," said the doctor, wringing her hand, sympathetically. "I ain't no doctor. I came in on his ticket."

* * *

All but One.

A newly married young woman had a gas cooker fixed in her kitchen. The gas company sent her a card of rules, with instructions to study them well, and see that she couldn't understand they would explain to her. Imagine the clerk's surprise the next morning when he heard her say over the phone:

"I can understand all the rules except the one at the bottom of the card. 'See other side.' It's impossible to see the other side; the man has fixed it against the wall."

The Underground Trail
Or, The Lair of the Mole

By Roger Knowles

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CHAPTER XIX.

THE apartment into which the passage admitted through a second door at a distance of thirty feet or more from the street tunnel was a long, narrow, high chamber entirely subterranean, without an aperture apparent for the admission of light or air. The walls and floor and ceiling were solid concrete. Several opposed pairs of buttresses, springing from floor to roof, gave it the effect of a modern vault. In a corner at one end, the bottom of a flight of steps emerged from behind a curtain wall. No other entrance or exit was visible. All this Lane was able to observe in a dim blue light emanating from a tube half-concealed behind a buttress near the roof.

Some one was descending the stairs; the sound of footsteps stood hollowly through the place. Lane turned his eyes toward the staircase with a tingling expectancy; he could scarcely contain his impatience to see who it was that came to a rendezvous with this assassin in a lair hidden away under the city. Neither he nor John Doe had spoken a word from the time they entered the apartment.

The man on the stairs came lower and lower, and, at the bottom of a time, emerged from behind the curtain wall. Lane stared at him hungrily. He was wrapped in dressing gown. There was something familiar about the figure which arrested Lane's attention and piqued his recollection. He felt he must be certain of the man's identity; but he was vaguely certain that he knew him.

The man spoke. "Who's this with you?" he demanded, gruffly, eying Lane. Outward hope lighted the breast of his voice would furnish identification, if it were some one he knew; but the rocky walls so broke up and reverberated the tones that they not only lost all individuality, but all semblance to an earthly voice, and resembled the booming echoes of doom.

Lane heard his companion of the many laugh uncomfortably. "A man who dug me out of jail," he replied. "He says that he is a friend of McGuire's; that McGuire sent him secretly to help me. His name, I believe, has been Doctor Rochester, for this occasion."

"Who's McGuire?" thundered the voice of the other. He was still standing near the stairs, evidently not choosing to come too close to them.

Lane heard the mocking laugh again; it rattled abominably among the medieval buttresses of the walls. "It's no great matter," he replied. "His friend here got me out, and that's the important detail."

Lane understood many things in a flash. Believing that he had made an easy dupe of the mayor's assassin, he had instead been duped from the first. Doe had counter-tricked him. Pretending to be deceived, he had used him as an immediate hope of escape, and had played him thoroughout the affair until now, when it was no longer necessary to keep up the deception.

The truth was not reassuring. It carried a corollary. Doe, by his free speech, had revealed his intention that Lane should never leave the place to which he had been brought. Lane knew too much for the good of Doe and his confederates, and, therefore, too much for his own good.

The voice of the other man was booming through the hollow place. "What did he let you out for?" he was asking. "What was his game?"

"Why, I suppose he schemed that the thing would happen that has happened," Doe replied. "How he tapped the underground system I don't know; it was probably bone-headed luck. But he found out that there was something going on in the tunnels, and he came to me in disguise with a story about being sent to help me out through them. I figure out now that he thought I would come to my friends underground, and that he could follow me, and learn something. Well, I've become one of friends, and so has he come with me. And it is quite likely that he will learn a great deal, although I cannot promise that it will be just what he may have desired to learn." In the soft laugh with which Doe brought his speech Lane read warrant of death.

"I see," commented the man at the foot of the stairs. "Rather shrewd of him. Too bad to waste such genius; we might have made good use of a brain like that."

"With proper training, we might," assented Doe.

"Suppose you bring him upstairs, where we can be more comfortable, and we will see what is to be done," went on.

"Rather interests me, this young man. We'll dispose of his case first, and then see what is to be done."

So saying, the man turned to ascend the stairs, followed by Lane, the assassin bringing up the rear.

He plunged sprawling along.

CHAPTER XX.

THE stairway was narrow and steep. It was constructed of solid stone, a wall, apparently; it had neither door nor window in it through long reaches of ascent. At an elevation which Genoa judged must be equivalent to the first floor, it turned abruptly to the right, evidently having reached the corner of the building, and passed up within another wall. Lane could scarcely believe that such a stairway as this, leading from such a chamber as the one they had quitted, could exist in a modern city. It was an abominable anachronism. How, he wondered, had it been possible to construct such a system with secrecy; how had it escaped sensational notoriety?

Lane was fully aware that his situation was critical. He formed no plans, beyond a vague but determined purpose to escape from the house at any cost to himself or those who held him in their power. Failing in that, he must find some means to communicate with the outer world. He racked his wits for an idea, but could hit upon no device that promised success. He regretted more than ever that he had surrendered possession of his weapon. The reflection that he had done so to satisfy the suspicions of a man who was at the time fully aware of what he was, and what his intentions were, was peculiarly annoying. All the time conjectures as to how such a staircase might be constructed were running through the back of his head; he was distressfully occupied in a solution of that problem.

A flood of light from above blinded his eyes, unused to brilliant illumination. He blinked for a space as a door had been opened from the steps into a well lighted room. It was a sleeping apartment, spacious and elegantly appointed, pertaining to a home of wealth and refinement.

He found himself in the midst of the room, under a blaze of light. Standing at the foot of the bed, with his face partly in shadow, was the man who had been in the chamber beneath the ground. Lane looked hard at him. There could be no mistake; his first suspicion, caught in the darkened cellar, was verified. The man was Herkimer Horton.

In the midst of the confounding emotions that swept over him, Lane knew that Herkimer Horton was taking a step toward him. "Now let's see who this man is," he growled.

Lane braced himself for the crisis.

Reaching him, where he stood in the center of the floor, Horton shot out his left hand and laid hold of the false beard which Lane had worn throughout the adventure, and which great labor and many accidents had put much awry on his chin. Horton's right hand was grasping something in his pocket of his dressing gown.

The beard came off with the first slight jerk of the fingers, and he stood revealed in the presence of the man in whose house he had frequently been entertained. There was a bellow of rage from Horton, and his right hand whipped out a revolver.

Throwing himself with full force on Horton's chest, Lane reached across his body and clutched the hand with the hand that held the weapon. His left hand clenched the hairy throat of the elder man.

He bore him swiftly toward the bed, turned him backward across it, and held him there, pressing down into the man's chest, his right hand, crossed between their bodies, holding the wrist that controlled the weapon.

Glancing behind him for Doe, Lane saw the assassin turning way from a battery of buttons on the wall, and coming toward them, pistol in hand. As he glanced, struggling to wrest Horton's arm from him, the man fired. The weapon fired a shot, and he saw Doe fall to the floor with a grunt and a quick curse. Then all was darkness.

The result of the shot encouraged him to believe that his luck had turned. He felt the force of Horton's late struggles were already growing weaker, and who would soon be overpowered. His fingers were on the revolver; in a moment more he would possess it, and be master of the situation.

There was a sound and scurry of feet, the door to the hall burst open, and three men, armed and full of fight, tumbled into the room.

For an instant Lane looked at them in eager expectancy, hoping some miracle had brought help to him. A second glance showed him how wrong he was. The men were not what he had known as Horton's servants; butler, footman and chauffeur, rigged out in regalia of their household uniforms.

The anachronism was maintaining itself. His burly retainers had come to the aid of their lord and master at the ringing of a bell.

CHAPTER XXI.

THREE shots sped from the pistol in Lane's fingers at the men as they leaped toward the bed whereon he was

Some Hard Knocks

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The injurious action of coffee on the hearts of many persons is well known by physicians to be caused by **caffeine.** This is the drug found by chemists in coffee and tea.

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his hands, and his arms to the elbows. Enlarging that much he could not move, which gave him access to his knife, it was not long before he had cut away the remaining ropes, and stood free in the center of the room, looking about him to see where to begin the enormous task of saving himself, and Eleanor.

The odor of gas was increasing in the room.

CHAPTER XXIII.

His first thought was to find the entrance by which he had come into the chamber with Doyle, the assassin, and make his way back to the tunnels, whence he could eventually reach the surface and spread the alarm. The alarm was the important thing. Its immediate effect would be to free Eleanor from her danger. Horton would have no need to muzzle her after the secret should become public property, would be like putting a cork in a broken bottle.

Standing in the center of the chamber, he endeavored to reconstruct the scene of his first entrance into the place; to recall what Doyle said, and where Doyle, his companion, had stood. There were two things to go by; the stairway behind the curtain wall, and the foreshortened appearance of the buttresses, which had impressed themselves on his memory, in dimensions and proportion.

All he was struggling against some impediment in his brain to restore the mental picture, there was a snapping within flash before his eyes, he found himself wondering inconsequentially how it had been possible to construct such a chamber, and how such a stairway as that one behind the curtain wall, under modern working conditions. The problem assumed prepossessing in his attention grotesquely out of ratio to its importance, and would not be ignored.

He laughed aloud, and then tottered toward the wall to see how it had been done. He struck his head against one of the buttresses. That restored him. Full self-consciousness and self-control returned, with them a realization that the odor of gas was gaining. Strange, he thought, that he had not noticed it in his first thought of it. He must find the leak and stop it before the atmosphere became too suffocating.

Leaning against the wall, he stared stupidly into recesses of the chamber, looking for the leak. How did a leak look like? Was it large or small? What was the color of it, the shape? He heard his voice asking the questions, and brought himself up with a jerk. He began again to feel nauseated; something lay through the left and nostrils like a cold, heavy, forked rod. He started hastily on a tour of the room in search of the source of gas. The matter was serious; he must stop that leak!

The dim, blue light from the tube gave a ghastly air to the place. He could see nothing clearly in the grisly glare. But he could see quite clearly that there were no pipes exposed; either gas or water pipes, or those carrying electric wires. Whence, then, came the escaping gas? He broke into an impatient, anxious run, stumbling along the wall like a rat in a cage, and, like a rat, sniffing with outthrust nose.

A seizure of nausea threw him dizzily to the floor. His face lay against the cool, rough concrete. The air was purer there; it revived him. He breathed deeply of it, remaining prone until he was quite refreshed, and able to think clearly again.

He determined to give up his futile search for the gas, and devote his whole attention to discovering the secret door by which he had entered, in the single hope that he might be able to effect an exit there. He knew only hopelessly in the direction of the stairway, leading him through the house. How in the world could Horton contrive to have all this work done in and about the house without a public discovery of it? He could not neglect the question; it challenged him.

A ridiculous solution suggested itself. Perhaps he had walled up the workmen who had done it when they had finished their work, so that their knowledge of his secret would perish. But who had walled them up? He was back in a circle to the same difficulty. Horton himself? And where were they walled up? He tried to subdue the insistence of the problems and forget it for more important matters, but it would not be denied.

He stood once more in the center of the floor, trying to reconstruct the picture as he had seen it on his first entrance, and to locate exactly the aperture through which he had come with the assassin. How long had it been since he had stood there the first time? How long had it been since he stood there with Doyle? How could he restore the scene in memory? He could not guess; time had lost all meaning in his brain.

But he knew that he must hasten.

Here he had stood, and there he had first seen the curtain wall. Instead of rising from behind the curtain wall that screened the stairs. How had those stairs been built to lead to the farmhouse in the heart of the walls without discovery? Strange that some impertinent workman had not found out about it, and made a Sunday story of it!

There was Horton now, coming again from the house and stairs, around the end of the curtain wall. Horton, in his dressing gown. He had grown smaller and larger than that when he saw him last.

It was not Horton at all; it was some one else, but known. He would soon see who it was; the figure was approaching him, and apparently unarmed.

A low sound, tense voice reverberated through the stony vault. The figure threw out its arms, and a hand grasped his hand, and another was laid guiltily on his shoulder. Lane looked through the ghastly light into the face of Eleanor Horton, alight with fear and anxiety. "Griswold!" she said. "Griswold! The gas! Griswold. Merciful heaven, the gas!"

In that instant Griswold Lane understood why Horton had come to his rescue. Merciful heaven, the gas! It was the gas that was destroying Horton's quiet way of getting rid of him.

CHAPTER XXIV.

Griswold was not at once surprised that Eleanor had come to him. He had experienced too many vicissitudes in the past few days to be astonished by one more trick that Fate might play with him. Her presence only reached his brain as a command of himself. She led him toward the staircase. Not a word passed between them; the moment was too full for speech. They were within two strides of the end of the wall screening the stairs when two things happened. The light vanished from the room, and in the same instant there was a deafening crash at the foot of the stairs.

They stopped in their tracks. "What's that?" whispered Eleanor.

The air was filling with a cloud of pungent, palpable dust.

"I don't know."

"Hurry!" Eleanor urged. They were close to the foot of the stairs; they would be there in a minute, and reaching them through the darkness.

Their outstretched hands, groping before them, struck against an obstacle solid wall. They spread their arms, reaching to find the end of the curtain wall behind which the stairs awaited them. Their feeling fingers passed over interminable rough concrete. Each traced it to a corner of the room and back again until their hands collided in the center. There was no sign of an end of the curtain wall. They knew they could not have circled it; their hands would have met, or felt, and come upon one of the side walls, for those were buttresses.

It was Eleanor who solved the riddle. Her finger tips detected a straight, vertical crack in the surface, precisely where there was expected to find the edge of the opening. It was as though two walls met; like the joint, for instance, formed by a door when it is in double door. "Griswold, they have shut us in," she said. "The door is closed. That is what we heard drop."

A sudden thought struck horror through the young man's mind. He forgot their haste, and the gas, although even then he was gasping for breath. "Eleanor," he said, "how does it happen that you are here?"

The girl's fingers closed in a brief clasp on his. "I came to see if I could help you. I knew you were in dreadful danger."

"But how did you come? How did you know where I was? How could you get clear?"

"I was trying to reach a telephone. I slipped away from the man watching me. I went into father's room, and saw a door opened where I had never known there was a door. I knew what it meant; I had heard them talking in front of my door about a vault and laughing gas; came down to help you. Oh, Griswold, we must get out! This horrid smell! I am smothering. They aren't going to keep us in this place, are they, Griswold? They wouldn't do that, would they?"

He could not answer. Incredible as it was, he believed that Eleanor had been trapped into this death hole so that she might die with him and be silenced. The chance to come had been made easy for her; a relaxed guard; a free way to her father's room; the open door; hints previously dropped in her hearing concerning his fate; and, at the end, a door slid aside at their egress, and the extinguished lights, until then permitted to burn. He sheltered the girl from the hideous suspicion. "There is another way out," he said. "Come, we will find it!"

She must not die! She could not die like this! It was impossible that this exquisite creature, so abundantly vital, so alluringly alive, should in a moment be a cold, impassive thing; should pass from the breathing beauty of young womanhood into the stagnation of eternity. He rebelled furiously against the thought.

He drew her closer to him, supporting her; she was rapidly growing weaker. There is a chance, he kept whispering. His head was bursting with pain; his tongue was swollen in his throat; explosive pounding filled his brain, accompanied by flashes of brilliant fire before his eyes. He was seized with delicious weariness in his limbs; the blackness swung about him in eddying pools.

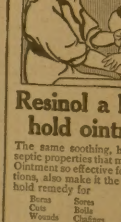
He contrived to drag the girl across the floor with him. She became more of a dead weight with his every step. He knew not whither or to what end. "I am sick," she sighed. "Oh, Griswold, I am so sick!"

She slid from his weakened arms, slipping to the floor, moaning. He knelt beside her. "Stand up, dear," he gasped. The air is better here. Crawl, Eleanor; crawl, and follow me."

He began to crawl across the rough, cool ground, on tottering knees and bruised hands; the flesh of his hands felt numb to the touch. He crawled under his weight from time to time, throwing his head forcibly against the floor. And with the strength of utter despair, half dragging and half leading Eleanor before him.

His head struck against the wall of the room. He knew not where he was, but his experience of the delectable mental relief that comes at the end of a bitter journey. "Here we are," he gurgled, exultantly. Twisting himself laboriously until his back rested against the wall, he sat on the floor, legs stretched before him.

The girl flung herself on her back, at full length along the ground. Griswold gently drew her head to rest on



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So I told him I wanted to try the horse for a month. He said that was all right, but I must pay me the first, and I'll give you your money back if the horse isn't all right." Well, I didn't like that. I was afraid the horse wasn't all right" and that I might have to whither for my money if I once parted with it. So I didn't buy the horse although I wanted it badly. I'm glad of this yet me thinking. Now I have a Washing Machine—the "1900 Gravity" Washer.

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So I said to myself, I will watch the "1900 Gravity" Washer what I wanted the man to do with the horse. I won't make me for people to ask me. I'll offer them my money until the machine is proved to them.

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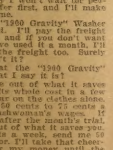

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his knees. He bent over her, as though she were a child; her breath, cold from the air he had long inhaled, breezed her closed lids. Her breast heaved convulsively. There was the noise of struggles in her throat, as she gasped for oxygen. "I am so sleepy," she murmured, languidly.

"And I," he answered.

A sudden peace swept into him. He was sensible of a strong feeling of exultation. Why not? Why should they not pass on together, now, in the supreme moment of known peace? There was no other time. There had seemed to be much to live for; but happiness was insecure at best, and life was only a tragedy. If one of them should be taken from the other in a year, or a dozen years, it would be worse than this. It was much better that they should go together, now, when there was only joy in their lives.

He leaned more closely above her, seeking words, when Blood-by," she whispered, finding them. He felt them frame a smile for answer, and that was all; that, and a long, long, deep, ecstatic with peace. He leaned back against the wall, and slept.

This last opening story leads to very extraordinary situations and a dramatic episodes. The reader will find it eminently worth reading. Next week's Ledger will contain further chapters of it.

★ ★ ★

FOOLISH OPTIMIST.

He always looked for things to come
That never came,
He always heard the raging storm
As it were a song;
He always thought the sun would set,
Though round him draped the night—
That all this misery soon would end,
And everything was right.

He always knew he would do well
While what he acted on
He always knew the thing would sell,
Prove happy as a book;
He smiled at every protest made,
At every quarrel spite,
And answered with a smiling face
That everything was right.

Foundations crumbled 'neath his feet
Of friendship true,
But still upon the abstract wild
He rode on rosy wings;
Debt swamped him under, trouble warped
And wrecked his whole life,
But even to death he made reply
That everything was right.

★ ★ ★

Her Strategy.

"It's got to stop!" insisted Pilkins.

Mrs. Pilkins maintained her placidity and continued sewing.

"Hasn't it got to stop?" he added, more mildly.

"No, it hasn't," said Mrs. Pilkins, and when Pilkins showed signs of exploding she finished, hastily, "I mean, not yet."

"I fail to comprehend you," her husband said, with great indignation. "You are an unnatural mother. Here your daughter is on the point of eloping at the age of 17 and you refuse to raise a hand to stop it. You tell me you won't stop it!"

"Not at all," said Mrs. Pilkins, sweetly. "I said I couldn't stop it! And neither can you nor anybody else."

"Shiney, my dear Mrs. Pilkins, "you are an unusually exasperating woman sometimes! This is one of the times! If you haven't lost your sense or forgotten the English language, do you mean to say you can't tell Guinevere not to see that young Mr. Sniffet of a Thompkins seven nights a week?"

"Oh, dear no!" said his wife. "And I could quit the house, if I chose, and ball and that we had inherited $10,000,000,000, any of which remarks would make not the slightest impression.

"If you want to exercise your vocal chords you might try it, William!" amplified Mrs. Pilkins. "But I'll tell you, severe aside and say, 'Daughter, I want to point out to you that you are making a very grave mistake in acting as though young Thompkins was the only male creature on earth! If you will take your time and look around a little you'll find dozens that can give him cards and spades! Moreover, you are far too idiotically young to be considering matrimony and will probably ruin your life and have to get a divorce. I know men, and this Thompkins person never will earn over $8 a week—he has a retreating chin and his eyes are too close together, and when you've had the liberty I assumed of his face. You'll have to do your own washing and ironing and take care of ten children—now, open your beautiful eyes, I beg of you!'"

"Well, that would be something like it!" murmured Pilkins, interested.

Mrs. Pilkins kept on sewing. "I suppose you fancy Guinevere would at once be smitten with that line of action that papa knows best! Yes, she would say, 'I can see the truth in your wise remarks, father dear, and I'll thank you? When Tommy comes this evening please assist him down the front steps quickly!'

"Not at all, my poor deluded husband! Your child could set her teeth grimly, turn pale and die heroically; that wild horses would not drag her from Tommy. She will be true to him forever! And then she'd write him a tear-stained note telling of your cruelty and her heroism and everlasting devotion! And if you forbade him the house that would merely make it all the more romantic and she'd be sliding down the porch pillars from an upstairs window to meet him on the corner!"

Pilkins groaned and clutched his head. "You may be right, Emma," he admitted. "They are that way, now that I consider the matter! How do parents stop their offspring from making everlasting fools of themselves, anyhow?"

"They don't," said Mrs. Pilkins. "Did you ever hear of a parent's circumventing a love affair by force. You know you never did! The only hope or chance is that one of the parties is taken with an attack of common sense. It does break out occasionally. In fact, for seventeen years I've been training Guinevere for just this occasion.

"I never told you, did I, how I came near running away with the grocery delivery boy when I was 15? It sounded lovely and I lived in a dream outside of which the tears and moans and yells of my protesting parents sounded faintly and made pleasantly substantial background. Then something inside my head reached out cold, clammy fingers and squelched me. I became excited over it and didn't take the fateful step. I hope that's what will happen in Guinevere's case!"

"But what if it doesn't?" asked Pilkins, somewhat tremulously.

"I'd thought of that," admitted Mrs. Pilkins. "So I arranged with that nice school down East and got Guinevere accepted. I heard from there today. She writes that she is very excited over all the girls she may meet and is already planning to whose seashore home she'll be invited next summer, so that she is now forgetting Thompkins at the rate of a mile a minute!"

"Thank heaven!" groaned Pilkins. "Why under creation didn't you tell me so before?"

"Oh, I love to hear you talk!" said Mrs. Pilkins.

★ ★ ★

He Got Even.

"Now, I want you to apologize to little Freddie the first time you see him for making him cry. I think you should never fight. Now, promise me you will apologize the first time you meet him."

"All right, mother, I will," readily promised Willie.

The next day Willie met Freddie.

"I want to apologize for making your nose bleed," said Willie.

Little Freddie made no reply, but started down the street with his nose in the air.

Willie grew angry at his little friend, but suddenly thought of an idea. Running around Freddie at least as his legs would carry him, he met Freddie coming slowly down the street.

"Hey, Freddie," he called.

"Whatcher want?"

"Isn't this the second time I met you?"

"Yes."

"Well take this, then," said Willie, with a well-directed punch on Freddie's nose, which knocked the lad into the mud.

"O-o-o," wailed the unfortunate Freddie, struggling to his feet, "what did you do that for?"

"My mother told me to apologize to you the first time I met you," replied little Willie, "but she didn't say anything about the second time I saw you."

★ ★ ★

Couldn't Be Worse.

Senator Thomas P. Gore of Oklahoma recently told the following story:

A prisoner was brought before the bar in the criminal court, but was not represented by a lawyer.

"Where is your lawyer?" asked the judge who presided.

"I have none, sir," replied the prisoner.

"Why not?" queried the judge.

"Because I have no money to pay one."

"Do you want a lawyer?" asked the judge.

"Yes, sir."

"Well, there are Mr. Thomas W. Wilson, Mr. Henry Eddy and Mr. George Rogers," said the judge, pointing to several young men who were sitting in the room, waiting for something to turn up, "and Mr. Allen is out in the hall."

The prisoner looked at the attorneys, and, after a critical survey, he turned to the judge and said:

"If I can take my choice, sir, I guess I'll take Mr. Allen."

★ ★ ★

Cheap Enough.

A woman with a shawl over her head entered a butcher shop where there were a good many different grades of meat being heaped over some goods displayed on the counter and marked "Choice bits." The butcher hastened over and said:

"I am selling those cheap today, madam, only two cents apiece."

The woman shook her head. "Too high," she said.

"One cent, then," the butcher ventured. still the woman shook.

"Well, then, when I'm not lookin' suppose you just take 'em."

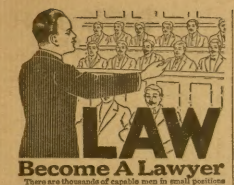
★ ★ ★

Utterly Impossible.

"What is this 'She Stoops to Conquer?'"

"An old-fashioned play."

"It must be old-fashioned. In her modern garb woman can't stoop."



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By HAPSBURG LIEBE

Begun in No. 14, April 3. Subscriptions can begin with that issue, or back copies can be obtained from news stands, our agents, or by mail from the office of publication.

PART II.

WITHOUT attracting notice, Seth Walker took Clara de la Cruz, the unconscious girl, up in his arms and carried her out through the grounds and across the street to the tumble-down house where she lived. In response to a rap, an old woman opened the door.

"The saints have mercy!" she cried creakingly. "It is Clara! Senor," she implored, "tell me—is she dead?"

"She is not dead," Walker declared, laying the girl on a low bed. "She—there, she has opened her eyes! She is better now. Are you not, señorita?"

Clara looked up in wonder. "What was it—what happened?"

Walker took a chair by the bedside and began to apply a bandage the old woman had brought. He told the girl how it had occurred, apologizing profusely. "I cannot hope for your entire forgiveness," he finished; "but I'll be mighty glad if you won't blame me too much. I deplore it more than I can say, I assure you."

A mirror later Clara sat up. Walker's strong arm ready and anxious to assist her. "It is all right now, senor," she said, but a little shy. "We are not to blame. I had no right to be standing at the window. I was bound to get—"

She put a handkerchief to her eyes. Walker read a great deal in the old woman's silence at that moment.

"Why wouldn't they let you?" he asked, without saying whom he meant by "they."

"It is strange, perhaps," said the woman with whom Clara lived, "but Lucilia wouldn't let her come. I am sure Clara is as pretty as Lucilia—and I know her blood is better, though Lucilia's is noble."

"In Señorita Clara's beauty," said just Seth Walker, "may be where the trouble lies. She is even prettier than the señorita de Forza." His half just realized it, perhaps. "My opinion of the señorita Lucilia is very high, I admit; still this girl is prettier than she. Señor Walker was little used to women folk, it will be remembered.

Then, after assuring himself that Clara was in no danger whatever, Walker went back to the bails grande at the great house across the street. And when they were dancing the last dance of the evening, Lucilia asked her big American sweetheart to call on her the following day. Naturally he promised.

When the guests were preparing to depart, the Texan told them of the work of the stray bullet. He was not altogether satisfied with the comment; some of the dashing Spanish beauties chose who took any other interest in it than that spoke of it lightly, as if it were worth no more than mere passing notice. Of course, of course, was but the carrying out of their everlasting courtesy.

The next day at the appointed hour Walker strolled up to the De Forzas' residence, where he was received by the smiling Lucilia. She himself led him the way to the roof garden, where they had been so happy the night before. On a little round table were glasses, cakes and tiles and a bottle of old wine; in two high earthen vases were huge clusters of gorgeous blossoming flowers of sweet perfume; and lying on a chair was the inevitable guitar—the sweet, inevitable guitar. And, as Lucilia had been expecting, the Texan told himself flatteringly.

Little mention was made of the affair that had happened the evening before. Lucilia seemed studiously to avoid it; and Seth Walker was not one to beat for anything he thought his heart starve itself to death. Women, more than men, know that suspense makes a lover more ardent. Lucilia sang several songs with a guitar accompaniment, including the Sebeliana, of which Walker knew. She sang also the Moric, as well as another song that went all in minors, and the sweet, sympathetic, yet plaintive Spanish love song almost drew Walker to his knees before his charming hostess.

When the ranch owner left Lucilia, he went directly across the street to the humble home of the girl Clara de la Cruz. She was sitting in the doorway, apologizing for the poorness of her dwelling. Then Clara came from the other room, and Walker was amazed beyond his powers of expression to learn that she was suffering none at all from the bullet she wounded. She was quite unwillingly, out of the house and around the old pile of fallen masonry into the shade of a cottonwood tree, where they sat down on a huge flat stone.

Clara suddenly looked up at the big Texan, and, for the first time, said anything to say that was coming decisively. "Senor," she began, not mincing her words, "I have come to tell you that I regard the honor highly, but—are you not going to see Lucilia, across the street?"

"Yes," Walker answered. "Why?"

"Surely you should know that she will not like it, senor, to have my poor, tumbled-stone house," said Clara. "She will not like it, I repeat, Senor Marteen; even though she should know you are coming only to see how my hurt is doing."

"I think you are mistaken there," Walker declared, smiling at the thought of Lucilia claiming him that far. "She will not care."

"But you do not know Lucilia—you do not know Spanish people, senor," Clara protested.

"If—just suppose If—I were coming to see you as I am going to see Lucilia," asked Walker, "could you tell me why to see Lucilia if I had hurt her as I hurt you?"

Clara looked up petulantly. "No!" she exclaimed. "No—no! I'd ask you to send the medico—but let's not talk about that."

"I wonder," mused the Texan aloud, "if this girl wants me to quit coming here; that is, to send a doctor to see how she's getting on, and stay away herself?"

For answer, Clara turned and ran into the house. And Walker, blind as a stone, went off smiling.

A week passed, and the ranchman had paid a visit to both Lucilia and Clara each day. His going to see Clara was purely, so far as he saw, to inquire after her condition because of having accidentally hurt her. Of course his going to see De Forza's daughter was because he was anxious to make her his wife.

On this day he meant to ask the beautiful Lucilia to marry him forever, to take him and his name for better or for worse. And he was not sure that she would accept him. If she didn't, he meant to leave San Macati the next minute. In keeping with this decision, he went to Clara's first; and he found her under the banana trees that grew at the rear of the old pile of fallen masonry. In her hands was the inevitable guitar. Walker had never heard her play on it; there had always been some excuse.

"Senorita," he said after the usual greeting, "I fear I may have to leave San Macati in an hour, and on that account I am going to ask you to sing for me just once."

Clara turned her deep, dark eyes upward, and it seemed to Walker, even in his blindness, that they were suddenly saddened. "Going away—where?" she asked, and somehow for the one time in her thought she spoke more to herself than to him.

"Yes; at any event I shall go away," said Walker, absently.

"Are you sure that Lucilia is going with you? I—I thought you were in love with Lucilia."

"I am going over there now to ask her to marry me," the Texan confessed, somewhat awkwardly. "If she accepts me or not, I shall go away. Tell me, do you think she will marry me?"

"It depends," Clara answered.

"On what?"

"It depends on what you are worth in money," said Clara, very positively, "since you've asked me. I would not have told you had you not asked me point blank."

"Well, well!" laughed Walker. "Perhaps she will refuse me, then. I'm poor Robert Martin just now, for what he has in his pockets at this minute, I do not know without looking."

Then Clara sang the Sebeliana, and played a sweet accompaniment on the guitar. Walker listened in wonder, for here was one who could sing even better than his Lucilia could sing! By and by, with her lovely eyes lowered and her voice filled with tears, she sang the prince of Spanish songs, Caballero, Vaya en Paz.

"Knight, Go in Peace," the Texan translated, for his own special benefit.

And when she had finished, Clara covered her eyes and told blind Seth Walker he had better go. Obediently, Seth Walker turned and—but looked forward when he had taken a dozen steps and saw Clara de la Cruz cover up her face with her hands, while her body shoulders tremble. His first impulse was to turn back—for almost did the blind man see. However, he thought with a smile—that was rather wan, he turned again toward the street.

Again did the master of Juan de Forza lead the big ranchman to the roof garden. Again was there the black bottle of wine, the high tiles, the fresh cakes. Again was there the huge vases of gorgeous flowers and the inevitable guitar—the sweet, inevitable guitar, as before. Lucilia sang Walker's favorites of the songs she knew, as before looking at him with winsome dark eyes and dimpling cheeks.

Walker could refrain no longer. Instead of knowing he should be looked so tall, standing there with the point of him straight as an arrow!

"Lucilia," he said, very slowly, but earnestly, "Lucilia, I want to marry you!"

Lucilia looked downward thoughtfully. "I am willing," she said in a businesslike voice, "but I would first be pleased to know just what you are worth in a money way, Senor Marteen. My father is a rich man, you understand."

"For Senor Marteen," smiled Walker, thinking of what Clara de la Cruz had told him, "hasn't a hundred pesos to his name."

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name—that I could swear to! Senorita, the woman I marry must be content to marry me for myself alone."

And then—Lucilla de Forza laughed coldly, albeit with a tinge of genuine regret. "It would be an unwise thing for me to take you penniless, Senor Marteen," she said. "No, I cannot. I thought you—but good day, Senor Marteen!"

She stood walking for him to depart. On her face was the shadow of a disappointment, in her eyes a look that told Walker that she regarded him as a trickster.

"I thought you loved me, Lucilla," said Walker.

"Ah," said Lucilla, "I do! There is not a woman in all the world who would not care for a big, strong, handsome man like you. Yes, I do love you, and very much—but not enough to marry you, penniless as you are! Go, senor, that I may forget you soon as possible. I thank you for telling me so early of your position. Adios!"

Walker was so thoroughly awake, now. He smiled. He was man enough to conquer his disappointment.

"You are welcome, senorita," he said, taking up his hat. "And please bear it in mind when I ask you to pardon me for a little deception. I assure you it was necessary in my work of finding a wife who would love me for myself alone. My name, Senorita de Forza, is not Martin, but Walker. In short, I am Seth Walker, owner of the great Double-U Ranch just over the border, the Double-U Ranch that is worth three times as much as the wealth of your father. Adios, Senorita Lucilla!"

Walker turned and strode away without another word or look. And as he descended the stairway that led down from the roof garden he heard the stamp of an angry woman's foot, heard a little exclamation that told of chagrin. But he did not turn back.

Almost without knowing what he was doing, he went directly to the home of Clara de la Cruz. He began to reflect, and as he reflected he saw. A great thankfulness came into his heart. He was glad that his infatuation for De Forza's daughter was young, and he was glad he had found her out. But—Clara—

Clara!

Perhaps he didn't love her as yet—but he decided that he could. She was accomplished, he knew, and he had learned that through the old woman. Plainly, Seth Walker wanted a wife who was worthy of him, one that would love him for himself.

Stealthily he went around the old pile of adobe. The girl was there, as he had left her an hour before. On the ground at her feet the guitar lay sweetly and eloquently silent. Standing yet closer, Walker saw that she was looking intently at something in her hand—and from all to some of the objects on the stone at her side. Still nearer he crept, and so cautiously that Clara did not know of his presence. He saw her lift the thing in her hand to her lips and kiss it hard!

It was a flower he had cast from his lapel because it had wilted. Closer, closer, he drew, until the girl saw him and with her already tear-stained face in her hands and began to sob silently and bitterly. When Walker saw the things on the stone at her side. They were another withered flower he had worn, a handkerchief with the initials in a corner, and a cigarette end. He picked up the cigarette end; it was his, he saw by the [illegible]

"Clara, could you marry a penniless man?"

Clara rose to her feet and faced him, smiling. "Whom?"

Seth Walker jerked out his under jaw "Senorita—love—Me!" he said.

"Yes—yes!" She entered the two half-circles of arms he held out, and he kissed her.

"Are you sure you like me better than you like Lucilla?" she asked a moment later.

"Much better, little girl," Walker answered. "But I didn't know it until Lucilla refused to marry me because she thought me without money. Are you sure the monetary part of it doesn't count with you?"

Clara looked up into his face with a great happiness in her dark eyes. "I am sure," she said softly. "It does not matter, amada mia! I will go with you anywhere! I will go any time. I will be happy with you even in a tent, or a house of mud—or even a hole in the mountains!"

It would have been strange for so beautiful a young woman as Clara de la Cruz to be without admirers and suitors. She had them, little as she reciprocated their affections. And as Walker held her in his arms he saw the appearance on the scene. It was Pedro Manzanos, one of the most prominent of San Macati's younger citizens.

"Perro!" he cried hotly, "American pig! Making love to two?" And seizing the Texan by the collar he jerked him almost from his feet. Then the ranchman turned, suspecting the ever-ready knife. He saw it flash in a ray of sunlight that filtered down through the banana leaves, saw the thrust out, a mighty fist, crashing it into Manzanos' throat. The young fellow prostrate, and his head striking against a stone corner of the adobe house. And at, fearing that he had killed the man, dropped to a knee and examined him. In a few seconds he had satisfied himself that Manzanos was only insensible, of which he gladly told Clara.

"But, senor!" exclaimed the girl, recovering as if from a trance, "you must go quickly from here! Pedro has four brothers and a sister! They will get you! Think how it will appear to them, your making love to two. Go, and when you are ready I will come to you. I will go to you anywhere! Oh, carrissima, go quickly!" She sprang to him and kissed him, urging him to the door.

"Listen to me for a minute," said Walker, calmly. "I am no coward; but I don't want to fight a wild bull. I will get my horse; then I will pass here and take you with me. We will cross the border and be married."

The young woman agreed, and the ranchman started for his hotel in a fast walk. As he went the flower from Lucilla de Forza had already given the alarm. She had watched him knock Manzanos down, and with a cry of rage the Americano had stabbed her countryman!

As Walker turned into the principal street, he saw a merry crowd in the Americano hotel bar-room, and he wondered what it was all about—but at that instant a revolver-bullet whizzed past his face, and he wondered no more. With the alacrity of a man used to horses, he sprang to the back of a slim roan standing by the curbing, kicked the hollow flanks, shouted—and took off amid a storm of badly directed lead. That night have used his own revolver with telling effect; but he reasoned that it would be blood shed to little avail.

So Seth Walker went back to the Double-U Ranch without a wife. But he had not given Clara up; he swore to himself that he would have her or lay waste the whole of Alamo and Mexico.

That evening he called his ten cowmen into his fine new house and told them of all that had happened, omitting only the most personal details. They told him to go straight to bed and get a good rest, telling him they would look after things after among themselves, and would probably be able to suggest a course of procedure on the morrow. He went to his own room and slept the sleep of one who needed it.

He could not say how long it had been when he awoke with ill had barely dressed himself when there came from the front a shout from Weslock Hunt, a cowboy, throat. Going hurriedly to the veranda, he saw that which almost took his breath away.

"Hi, bossi" cried Whiteside. "Greeting from the valiant ten! We told yuh we'd welch the deal for you, and we sure did—and here's yuh skirts, without a shot!"

Lined up in front of the house were the then cowmen, among them a padre from San Macati—and, also among them, sitting on a fine, spirited mare, was the senorita Clara de la Cruz, smiling happily.

All unduly her arm was the inevitable guitar, the sweet, inevitable guitar.

The End.

A Useful Cobweb.

A certain patrol wagon driver takes great pride in his horses and on a number of annual inspections has won the prize for the best-looking team. As the story goes, the inspector of the district is in the habit of visiting the barns and passing compliments on the condition of the stables.

The particular man in question during the last summer was always certain of compliments and his stable left nothing to be desired in the way of cleanliness. One day a new inspector was assigned to last look at the premises, which seemed spotlessly neat and clean, he frowned. His eye detected what looked like a cobweb in a dim corner of one of the stalls. The horse lover saw the inspector's face change and also the cause of it, He spoke up quickly:

"I keep that there web, inspector," he said, "to catch the flies. The way they torment that mare is somethin' terrible."

* * *

Cupid usually hits the mark, but he selects some mighty poor targets.

Stops Tobacco Habit in One Day

Sanitarium Publishes Free Book Showing How Tobacco Habit Can Be Banished in From One to Five Days at Home.

The Elders Sanitarium located at 604 Main St., St. Joseph, Mo., has published a free book showing the deadly effect of the tobacco habit and how it can be banished in from one to five days at home.

Men who have used tobacco for more than fifty years have tried this method and say it is entirely successful, and in addition to banishing the desire for tobacco has improved their health wonderfully. This method banishes the desire for tobacco, no matter whether it is smoking, chewing, cigarettes or snuff dipping.

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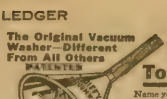

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Candy Tuft,	Poppy, 10 Va.,	Sweet Pea,	
Calliopsis,	Poppy Shirley,	Sweet William,	
Celosia,	Poppy Shirley,	Verbena,	
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I'm Going Back to Dixie	Love's Young Dream	Where Have You Been Billy
Oh You Beautiful Doll	Hysterical Rag	I'll Take You Home Again
Alexander's Ragtime Band	My Hula Hula Love	Down Among the Sheltering
I'd Love to Live in Loveland	The Only Girlie	I Wish I Had a Girl
Row, Row, Row	Say You Will	Sunshine of Your Smile
Somebody Else Is Getting	Dixie Doodle	Sunshine of Orange
Let Me Call You Sweetheart, I Wad	Chickens Come	Marshal Mallow Waltz
Alexander's Ragtime Band	Home Rag	Where the Silvery Colorado
To Be In Dixie, Casey	Hiawatha	Wedding Bells Are Breaking
Jones, Meet Pretty Rosie	Somebody Else Is	Down Deep Within
Casey Jones	Dixie Doodle	Chickens Come
Bring Back My Bonnie	Marshal Mallow	Home Rag
Oh, Will You Be Mine	Waltz	Hiawatha
Call Me Up Some Rainy	Where the Silvery	Somebody Else Is
Afternoon	Colorado	Getting
Oh, Will You Be Mine	Wedding Bells	Dixie Doodle
Call Me Up Some Rainy	Are Breaking	Marshal Mallow
Afternoon	Down Deep	Waltz
If I Only Had the Nerve	Within	Where the Silvery
Let Me Call You Sweetheart, I Wad	Chickens Come	Colorado
Bring Back My Bonnie	Home Rag	Wedding Bells
Oh, Will You Be Mine	Hiawatha	Are Breaking
Call Me Up Some Rainy	Somebody Else Is	Down Deep
Afternoon	Getting	Within
If I Only Had the Nerve	Dixie Doodle	Chickens Come
Let Me Call You Sweetheart, I Wad	Marshal Mallow	Home Rag
Bring Back My Bonnie	Waltz	Hiawatha
Oh, Will You Be Mine	Where the Silvery	Somebody Else Is
Call Me Up Some Rainy	Colorado	Getting
Afternoon	Wedding Bells	Dixie Doodle
If I Only Had the Nerve	Are Breaking	Marshal Mallow
Let Me Call You Sweetheart, I Wad	Down Deep	Waltz
Bring Back My Bonnie	Within	Where the Silvery
Oh, Will You Be Mine	Chickens Come	Colorado
Call Me Up Some Rainy	Home Rag	Wedding Bells
Afternoon	Hiawatha	Are Breaking
If I Only Had the Nerve	Somebody Else Is	Down Deep
Let Me Call You Sweetheart, I Wad	Getting	Within
Bring Back My Bonnie	Dixie Doodle	Chickens Come
Oh, Will You Be Mine	Marshal Mallow	Home Rag
Call Me Up Some Rainy	Waltz	Hiawatha
Afternoon	Where the Silvery	Somebody Else Is
If I Only Had the Nerve	Colorado	Getting
Let Me Call You Sweetheart, I Wad	Wedding Bells	Dixie Doodle
Bring Back My Bonnie	Are Breaking	Marshal Mallow
Oh, Will You Be Mine	Down Deep	Waltz
Call Me Up Some Rainy	Within	Where the Silvery
Afternoon	Chickens Come	Colorado
If I Only Had the Nerve	Home Rag	Wedding Bells
Let Me Call You Sweetheart, I Wad	Hiawatha	Are Breaking
Bring Back My Bonnie	Somebody Else Is	Down Deep
Oh, Will You Be Mine	Getting	Within
Call Me Up Some Rainy	Dixie Doodle	Chickens Come
Afternoon	Marshal Mallow	Home Rag
If I Only Had the Nerve	Waltz	Hiawatha
Let Me Call You Sweetheart, I Wad	Where the Silvery	Somebody Else Is
Bring Back My Bonnie

Only Comforter.

One time ago a young woman called at the home of a married fr nd named Mrs. Brown. She found Mrs. Brown in the most unhappy frame of mind. In the midst of sad tears she gave vent to her grief. Finally elicited the mournful information that poor little Fido had just passed on.

"I will never forget the look in your little darling eyes," the bereaved Mrs. Brown. "I offered him a cream chocolate and he wouldn't take it. Oh, dear! I do wish my husband would come home."

"We can easily arrange that," returned the other sociably. "I will telephone for him, if you wish it."

"I would be so glad, dear," sobbed Mrs. Brown. "Now that poor little Fido is dead, I feel so all I have is the whole wide, wide world."

On the Safe Side.

An old artisan who prided himself on his ability to drive a close bargain contracted to paint a huge barn in the neighborhood for the small sum of $12.

"Why, it earth did you agree to do it for so little?" his brother inquired.

"Well, said the old painter, "you see, the owner is a mighty unreliable man. If I'd said I'd charge him $75, likely he'd have only paid me $18. And if I charge him $12, he may not pay me but $9. So I thought it over and decided to paint it for $15, so I wouldn't lose much."

Sure to Win.

"So you think you have your opponent defeated before the campaign starts?"

"I'm sure of it. He is depending on odd-fashioned handshaking methods to make himself agreeable. I'm learning to dance."

Young Lawyer—"What is the matter?" Old Attorney—"They've all married then they don't care when they get home."

The Observing Child.

There had been a missionary address and collection at a certain church and a little girl who accompanied her father to the service seemed perplexed and meditative.

When she reached home she asked her mother whether the natives of Africa, of whom they had heard, were clothed.

"No," replied the mother, "they don't."

"Then," retorted the observant young lady, "what was the use of the button that father gave in the collection?"

The Stage Manager—"I can't that little ingenue get her lines. She's—"

The Rough Southerner—"she's got more lines than she wants but most of them are in her face."

Extravagant.

Kibel, the 5-year-old member of a very poor family, wanted to know her father that she had a new baby sister.

"Don't that splendid?" he asked. But hard lesson of the "high cost of living in these war times" had taken root in the young lady's mind and she answered solemnly:

"Why, daddy, I s'pose it's all right, but it seems to me there's a lot of things we needed more."

The Family Honor.

At a banquet of the ministers of New York, the Johnston of Methodist church told this story:

One of the members of my church has instilled into his family the belief that the collection is a vitally important part of the service.

Consequently his little boy Thomas never comes to church without his contribution.

One Sunday as the elders began to take up the collection at the morning service Thomas looked along the row to see if the usual generosity of the family were provided with a contribution.

Noticing a scrap of a envelope, he whispered:

"Say, mamma, any money?

"Hush!" was the reply.

The little man was shocked at the necessity great. In a flash the little fellow met the emergency by saying:

"Here—take mine. That'll pay for you and I'll get under the seat."

And, flinging his own coin into her lap, he disappeared under the pew where he remained until the alder had passed and the reputation of the family was saved.

It All Depends.

When James A. Garfield was president of Oberlin College, a man brought for entrance as a student his son, for whom he wished a shorter course than the regular one.

"The boy can never take all that in," said the father. "He wants to get through quicker. Can you arrange it for him?"

"Oh, yes" said Mr. Garfield. "He can take a short course. It all depends on what you want to make of him. When God wants to make an oak He takes a hundred years, but He takes only two months to make a toadstool."

A Shrewd Old Man.

"You're an old married man. What do you do when your wife begins to scold?"

"Me insure her. I talk back—discreetly, of course. I say tantalizing things. I make facial excuses. I simmer and get hot."

"But doesn't that make her a good deal madder?"

"It means it does. That's the intention. I want her to get so mad that she can't have any voice left to talk me to sleep."

"Gee, I wonder if I'll ever get as hardened as that?"

His Proud Boast.

A pompous manufacturer of machinery was showing a stranger over his factory. "That piece of work, isn't it?" he said, when they were looking at a very intricate piece of machinery.

"Yes," said the visitor, "but you cannot hold a candle to the goods we are turning out."

"Indeed!" said the chagrined manufacturer. "And what is your line?"

"Gunpowder, was the reply

Serious Case.

Wife—You must send me away for my health at once. I am going into a decline.

Husband—My! My! What makes you think so?

Wife—My dresses are beginning to feel comfortable.

An Explanation

"It must be great to be a man. One dress suit lasts you for years and years and a woman must have a new dress for every party.

"Yes, and one dress suit lasts a man for years and years."

"But I can't," regretted the woman "I must go to my office."

Quickly the child comprehended. "Oh you see a nurse lady, aren't you

Classified.

A woman in the car on her way to the office was much attracted to a little girl who sat next to her. Soon the two were in happy conversation. When in due time for the woman to get off, she said: "Please don't go yet," the little one replied. I want you to go home with me."

"But I can't," regretted the woman "I must go to my office."

Quickly the child comprehended. "Oh you see a nurse lady, aren't you

Her Father—"Young man, young man, would you take my daughter from me? You don't know a father's feelings at such a time; I must suppress them."

Her Lover—"Oh, that's all right. If you want to give three cheers, go ahead!"

Hewitt—"Cruet is a good salesman. He could sell a bathing suit to a perfect fish."

Abandoned the Curfew.

"I understand they have a curfew law out there now," he said.

"No," his informant answered, "they did have one, but they abandoned it."

"What was the matter?"

"Well, the bell rang at nine o'clock, he and almost every one complained that it woke them up."

His Indorsement.

The late Lord Iveagh once sent his ... to the bank to cash a check. ... clerk wanted it indorsed. ... demanded the soldier. ... "It's the rule, and I can't pay ... held ... "Then I'll indorse it myself," ... I'm sorry that I have known Lord ... off-time soldiers and have ... ave as a host, but always ... his donate to those who were ... index him. And I have, therefore, great ... ure in respectfully indorsing his ... check."

Very Careless of Him.

Two convicts were employed in tearing down a three story brick building. One end man was on top of the building taking off the bricks and sliding them down a long wooden chute to the ground, some thirty feet below. When the one was picking them up and piling them. When this latter colored man looked down over the pile up a brick the former accidentally let one fall, striking him directly on the head. Instead of its killing him, he merely looked up, without rising, and said:

"What you doin' tha, you nutt? You make me bite my tongue."

Had Never Met.

When P. T. Barnum was at the head of his "great moral show," it was his habit to send complimentary tickets to clergymen, and the custom is continued to this day. Not long after the Rev Dr Walker succeeded to the pastorate of the Rev Dr. Burke in Hartford, there came to the parsonage, addressed to Dr. Burke, tickets for the circus with the compliments of the famous showman. Dr. Walker at once sent the tickets for a funeral, and then investigated.

"Mr Hawes is dead and Mr Barnum is dead, evidently they haven't met."

A Vast Number.

The Rev. Dr. Joseph Parker of the City Temple, London, once had a collection, to the announcement of which he added the following postscript:

"Widows and orphans will not be expected to contribute."

A few Sundays later there was another collection for the same object.

"This time," said the preacher, "widows and orphans will not be exempt; for no battle ever made so many widows and orphans as the announcement made on the previous Sunday."

The Three Methods.

The teacher had impressed upon the class the necessity of keeping the teeth clean. Since, pedagogically, no impression is established without its corresponding expression, she had her young charges write a composition on the subject. The following gems are gleaned:

"To keep the teeth from decaying brush the mouth every morning."

"Three methods of preventing the teeth from decaying is to clean them after each meal."

The Editor's Reply.

A Kansas man wrote to his newspaper and asked: "What's the matter with my home? Every time when I go to feed them I find some of them have keeled over in the corner."

To which the editor replied: "They're dead."

Old Ma Tungstalot—"What does this paper mean by 'hors de combat?'"

Old Pa Tungstalot—"Shut you never learn nothin'? 'Hors de combat' is the French for exploded, you fool."

All Harmonious.

Nangle—"I hear there was a disturbance at the meetin' last night."

Plumbery—"Ye heard wrong, thin; for while McGowan hit Hogarty a clip in the eye we threw him out of the windy an' that stopped all trouble. Oh, no; everything was harmonious an' quiet."

A Young Naturalist.

A little lad of our acquaintance recently discovered why the giraffe has such a long neck.

"Cause his head is so far from his body," he explained, and none of us present could dispute it.

Too Good to Lose.

A Generous Offer.

A family living in South Chicago found a good deal of cream on a bottle of milk which had been delivered to the house, when a neighbor called to the family physician's servant held it up to the light and said: "Lemme here. I never seen anything like this before on one mile."

The man looked at it for a moment, scratched his head and replied "Well, I don't know what's the matter, but you can throw it out and I'll give you a fresh bottle in its place."

Rather Close.

"Met the original tightwad the other night."

"What did he do?"

"After I bought him dinner, theater tickets, and a midnight supper, he wanted to know if I was to see who paid the car fare home."

The Newcomer—"It might interest you to know that the eighty-second parallel passes through the front yard."

The Newcomer— Thank you for mentioning it. I'll keep my eye open, and if it happens again I'll speak to the police and have it stopped."

No Loss to the Community.

First Suburbanite—Well, good and I won't be neighbors much longer. I am going to live in a better locality."

Second Suburban—"So am I."

First Suburbanite—"Ah, are you going to move, too?"

Second Suburban—No, I am going to stay here."

A Restful Life.

Young Lawyer—"I have railway traveling, as a rule, but when we were South I found a perfectly lovely little railroad. It was just too sweet."

Chappie—"Yes, was it?"

Y. L.—"It was so quiet and restful. You could hear any time-tables to hot.er with

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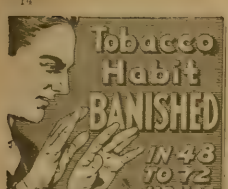
While they are cursing and scrambling to their feet, our resourceful correspondent hikes for tall timber and escapes



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The End of the World

-:- Or, -:-

ON TROUBLE ISLAND

By William H. Manning

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Begun in No. 11, March 13. Subscriptions can begin with that issue, or back copies can be obtained from news stands, our agents, or by mail from the office of publication.

CHAPTER XIII.
A NEW FOE.

AT THE same hour Gideon, walking on the tents, came upon Billy Rob, busily figuring in his everlasting ledger. Although the next day was set for the end of the world, the doctor was good spirits, but the veteran sailor was profoundly grave.

"Well," the younger man asked, "how does she add up, Billy?"

Bad, bad!" Billy replied dismally. "Same old story. I can fill page after page with my sins, but hardly an item do I get to my credit. A one-sided record, sure, and I feel deep in crime and sin."

"Let me see your book."

It was passed over, and the doctor read the pages with an awkward writing. Having scanned half a dozen of the debtor entries, he smiled.

"Don't you take your misdeeds rather seriously, Billy? Why put down that you looked hard at Dave Neal yesterday?"

Well, sir, you see I didn't fully approve of him, so I just give him a glimpse-like look. Was that a sin?"

"What did you say?"

"Never opened my lips, sir."

"Then that's right. You took the best biscuit in the batch. Why did you take it?"

"Because it was passed to me by the cook. I see it was the best, but the flesh was weak, and I just ate it up."

"Then you write that you became angry when a worm fell from a tree and slid down your back, that you exclaimed, 'Get out, you critter!'"

"Yes. He was a kind that leaves a tickle when he crawls over you, and for the first rush of passion I felt that my hark was no fit place for him, but I meddled with his pleasure, you see."

"And you call these things sins, do you?" Billy, you are making a poor showing with your journal. Now, the credit side. You have wisely put down that you brought a drink of fresh water for the captain; but I find no other entries on the page to your credit. Now, tell me, didn't you today give Peter Hill a chew of tobacco?"

"Yes, but ——"

"And didn't you help Moses Rand carry a heavy log?"

"Yes, but Peter was all out of tobacco, so he could not help it, and Moses, he, me, you see. Then the log was too big for Moses, so he needed a lift. These were needs, sir, and I just hadn't been so, I wouldn't have done it."

"Your logic is hard to follow, though I think I understand. Now, tell me what you deserve no credit for doing what is needed?"

"Why, of course not, sir."

"Billy, you will never succeed at bookkeeping. It isn't in you. These things that you have done what you can do serve credit for. They are good deeds. Ay, and you are always doing the like of them. Man alive, your heart simply bubbles peace on earth and good will to man, and to please you, Every day I see you give a helpful hand to others. Why, your sins are all moonshine. You have nothing to put down. Every day my heart as big as Goliath. I was a real bookkeeper for two years before I took to medicine, and I know. Cheer up, Billy!"

The sailor was hushed by this long speech. He eyed his entries keenly and then fell to rubbing his chin meditatively.

"Well, sir, if you've been a bookkeeper I suppose you ought to know, and I haven't looked at it that way. Fact is, I never gave them things you mention thought of. Always looking for sins, I was too busy hunting for my sins. Do you really think I would be right in setting them down as you say?"

"Beyond doubt. Your heart bubbles good deeds and your hands do them promptly. But in the items today, Billy I'll help you further, and we will make that credit page black with white deeds. Get your pencil at work, shipmate."

Billy had always been a conspicuous figure on shipboard and in camp, and Gideon had noted many other helpful things that now occurred to him. At the end of ten minutes the credit page had undergone a decided change, and Billy's spirits rose accordingly.

"Everything may not be lost, after all," he admitted gratefully.

A messenger came from Captain Foskett to summon the doctor, and the bookkeeping was postponed for the time. Gideon found the captain in consultation with Dalton and Rider.

"Doctor," said the latter abruptly, "an armed drogher is standing in to land at the south, and we think her black crew means mischief."

Ranger looked inquiringly at the skipper.

"It is only too true," the latter added. "The drogher plainly intends to land her crew, and you can guess, from what has gone before, what that means."

"Well," the doctor composedly answered, "we are in pretty good trim for fighting."

"We have but thirteen men, and they probably carry forty. What about that?"

"It simply means all the harder fighting on our part."

"It troubles me sorely that we should engage in such work when the world is so near its crash," said Captain Foskett sadly; then, his manner suddenly changing, he added: "I don't believe it to be the will of Providence that the servants of righteousness should bow their necks, at any moment, to the death-stroke of the heathen, so we will forget weak scruples and deal with these unregenerate creatures as Joshua did with the evil ones of his day."

Excellent!" declared Gideon.

Now, captain, what is to be done?" What you hear has just been brought by a scout. The drogher should now be near to land, and I ought to be ashore at her."

"Are you armed?"

"Meagerly."

The captain showed a pair of pistols, but the doctor insisted upon his taking a musket, also. Thus, both went equipped for serious work.

When they came in sight of the southern offing, they saw the drogher near at hand. Seven men were crowded there near to land, the same as on the west shore, and the black men clearly knew it. They were standing ready to leap, but not until it was necessary.

"Ugly customers, sir," said the doctor.

"Yes," said Foskett absently, giving them one glance and then turning his head toward the south. "Look, boy," he added, "there is mischief in that sky. If I were still wedded to this world I'd want to be in a fast craft and getting north with all sails spread.

"Do you still look for an earthquake?"

"Maybe there has already been one, somewhere, or a volcanic outburst. The smell of sulphur is stronger now. We shall be out of reach of it, if we are able, but the business has an ugly look."

"The black men are nearer at hand, so let us give our attention to them. They cannot make a landing at once, so why not summon our sailors and prevent more men from coming? I think there is time to get the hands here, and we can shoot those knaves down before they touch land. Is there a trouble Island for them?"

"How do we know they are pirates?"

"Their weapons!"

"I grant that they probably are all you claim, but we must not fire on men who possibly are well-meaning," said Gideon.

The doctor frowned. He felt that the golden opportunity was being lost. When the landing had been made it would be a fight with four to one against the Foskett party, and it was serious. The black men were hard fighters.

"Look, look!" he exclaimed. "Look away at sea! Do you notice what is there? See the water rushing in that great, black line!"

Foskett's gaze came back to earthly regions. He obeyed the direction, and then his face grew hard.

"A new foe!" he cried. "That is a tidal wave and it's running high enough to sweep this island, too. There is death in that rolling mountain of water!"

CHAPTER XIV.
THE MISSING GUNS.

GIDEON stared at the great wave, but words had left him. If it was big

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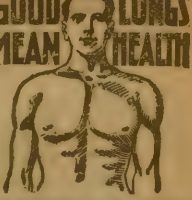

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enough, and forceful enough to sweep the island, it would solve all problems concerning the end of the world, as far as the Foskett party were concerned. Before its sweep, human forms and human lives would come to destruction wholly.

The men in the drogher had been much slower to detect the hostile advance, but as one of their number chanced to look astern, the alarm spread quickly and shrill cries of horror sounded. They rushed about, as if to find means of getting their vessel out of the way of the wave.

"Useless!" said Captain Foskett simply.

The drogher began to race violently, and to lift as the foothills of the water mountain reached them; then came the rearing body of the tidal energy.

Vessel and crew alike were engulfed, and carried toward the land. The white watchers made out but little, for spray was flung high, but in a short time there was a crash and the drogher was ashore.

The wave rushed on, struck the cliff, drove high with a sound like thunder, and some water overran the topmost point. But that portion, being mainly of rock, proved to be a great wedge. Its bulk parted the water, which divided, and then came away to see on either side of the island.

"Thank heaven!" murmured Captain Foskett. "What I prophesied ruin for all of us I forgot that that bluff was there. It has saved our party!"

There was a brief period when the watchers thought of nothing except to offer up thanks for their unexpected deliverance, then their attention turned upon the black mariners.

The drogher lay on the rocks, her visible side being forced up by a sharp point as if by a great spear. Totally wrecked, she looked melancholy enough to a sailor's eye. Hardly a man was to be seen on the deck, but as the minutes passed they began to emerge from below in twisted numbers, looking about them with terror-filled eyes. The count increased until twenty-two became visible, clearly being the only survivors.

They had saved themselves from being washed away by diving into the cabin, but before the blackness broke, but probably others had perished there when the drogher crumpled under the blow from the cliff.

"Tidal waves," said Foskett absentmindedly, "are, when of like dangerous kind, caused by earthquakes, but I think there has been a volcanic eruption, combined with this quake. We smell the one, and we see the effects of the other."

"These negroes are not so much of a menace as before," Gideon returned, in relief.

"Their number is cut nearly in half, but just how much mischief remains in them depends on what weapons they have saved, more than their courage. The island is doubtless capable of getting into new life."

This was proved true, though it was also largely fear that caused the survivors to make prompt preparations to get ashore. Food and a few other articles were brought on deck, and, as no water ran between the speared vessel and the shore, they scrambled to safety.

"They still have a rather good lot of weapons," remarked Foskett.

"In number, yes, but the few muskets they carry are much inferior to ours, and we can defy their other weapons as long as we have our firearms. Our real danger is in being taken by surprise."

"We must guard against that."

The skipper paused, meditated, and then slowly added:

"If I had my way we would pass the final hours of the night in perfect peace and holy concentration of mind, but perhaps this is a last trial of our faith. We will not give the heathen a chance to triumph over us. Now, let us go back to camp."

They went, and found some agitation there. Although nothing had been seen of the tidal wave proper, the rush of water past the two sides of the island had been impressive, and the scouts brought relief with their report.

"A tidal wave, eh?" said Captain Binir, in his weak way. "They often do vast damage. Whole cities have before now been washed away with their people drowned. I remember that, when I was skipper of the brigantine, Red Clover, we fetched to—"

He stopped short, the flash of memory failing him. His expression was pathetic as he looked around in another's face, tacitly asking for the light they could not give him.

"We understand, sir," said Foskett gently.

"He may understand," whispered Jim Black, nudging Billy Rob, "but I'm blessed if I do."

"Our captain wants to cheer the afflicted man up," Billy returned, frowning a little.

"Let's all start in on a fandango. That will do it."

"A fandango! With the world so near its end?" said Jim Black.

"It's always good to die game, mate."

So saying Jim winked in a very worldly manner, and Billy scowled. It was not in his just heart to judge hastily, but he was suddenly doubtful that Jim was ready for the great change to another world.

Mate Dalton approached with hasty steps.

"Captain," he exclaimed, "more than half of our weapons have suddenly disappeared—gone, I think, ashore. One of our muskets is among that number. We have the pirates near, and no way of beating them off."

Foskett straightened himself abruptly and his manner grew threatening, but Gideon was the more suspicious of the two.

"Ho!" he cried, "have you let enemies enter the camp and rob us?"

"No, I hardly think so," hardily retorted. "The watch has been sharp, and our men have covered all the lines of approach. No one could sneak in, much less carry off those guns."

"Then how have the guns gone?"

"You say!" the mate snapped. "Is it witchcraft, or what?"

"Let us get at this," interrupted Foskett calmly. "Are you sure that the following pickets have been well posted?"

"Exactly as you planned, yourself, sir."

"Then you have nothing to fear into camp."

"So I say, but where are the weapons?"

The three speakers were now standing alone, Billy and Jim having walked away, but Vashti was near enough to overhear. She moved forward and spoke quietly.

"Father," she explained, "not ten minutes before you came back Jim Black carry a musket into a thicket over yonder. He came out without it. Can it be he is playing a trick—or anything else—on us?"

"Show me that thicket, girl!" the father directed, and they went.

It was a thick bunch of bushes, and, at first, it yielded nothing, but Vashti, who was making herself the readiest worker, soon called Gideon.

"See that flat stone," she requested. "Has it any connection with the rocks that rise back of it?"

The doctor caught the idea and laid hold of the stone, but not so handily as to exist after the earthquake. It was a tug as it looked, and he swung it aside. A cavity was revealed beyond, with the slab like a door lying on its side.

"A hiding-place!" Dalton exclaimed. "Now, by—"

"We'll see."

With this Gideon lowered himself into the place. It was but a few feet deep and small, as was later proved. The light was not good, but his hands served him well, and muskets began to appear in rapid succession until all the missing ones were there. Nor did he rest with that, but rummaged, and brought forth other things, including the lost watches and the fabrics missed by the women. Then he came to the surface and said:

"I think," he said, with a grim smile, "that the maligned monkey can now prove a clean bill of innocence.

"Jim Black has been the thief, and the only thief," added Vashti confidently.

They looked at each other, astonished, and with that emotion Captain Foskett showed deep misery. He pulled at his beard nervously for a while, and then turned to his mate.

"Ira," he directed, "call Jim Black."

Dalton brought the man, who stared blankly at the pile of things, but only in dismay.

"Jim," asked the skipper sadly, "why have you taken these things?"

The sailor looked from face to face and, at first, seemed inclined to rebel against open speech, but he suddenly changed his mind.

"I'll tell you, sir," he said respectfully. "Tomorrow the world will be annihilated and fly into little bits, and every human being on its surface will be killed except myself. Now, with things that way, how could I live, especially on Trouble Island, without the necessaries of life? I was the only thief here, but I'm glad what I did was no crime. Do you feel that I should be left destitute when the rest of you die?"

Silence followed the novel plea. Nobody was in mood to ask how anybody was to exist after the earthquake level, but other things were clear. The captain looked shocked, while the mate secretly touched his forehead.

That was the explanation. Jim, well-meaning man, had been wrought upon by the prophecy of coming destruction until his mind was partly unset. Believing what he claimed, he had made stolen articles to save himself from the end and other surprising revelations of the fact that the wreck of the world would include himself.

The fine objects found at the south end of the island he had carried there, after the monkey was mentioned as the probable thief, to deaden the blame upon that innocent animal.

Foskett spoke in a word of censure, and no blame was in his mind. It grieved him profoundly that one of his men should be so afflicted, and all the more as he knew there was little left to restore him to reason. He directed the doctor to do what he could, and then turned his thoughts elsewhere.

"With the guns back," he said, we shall prepare for attack from the pirates."

CHAPTER XV.

OTHER MARINERS.

THE night passed without any hostile demonstration from the black men on the south end of the island, and early in the morning they took advantage of the subsided waters to leave the place. Their drogher was a wreck, but their boats had almost miraculously escaped, and [illegible] on Rocima.

Hoisting sails, they departed as fast as the wind would carry them. Nothing further was seen of their chief character, but that they really were pirates was hardly to be doubted.

Left in the island in peace, Captain Foskett's party prepared to meet the end of the world in becoming humility and submission. The day was the fifth of October, and all things earthly were to be annihilated before another day was done.

A pleasant day it was, too. All signs of the tidal wave had vanished, and though subterranean fumes came from the south, they were less noticeable than before. All things considered, it was a good day to die, and a good day to live, for the party on Racimo were few, but elsewhere in the world thousands waited, and prayed, and feared, for the great calamity. The thousands believed the prophecy, and the set day was with them. The last steps were taken to prepare for the end, and for translation to a better life.

Nevertheless, the twenty-four hours passed without mishap. The sun above its allotted hours, the sea wrinkled peacefully, the birds and fish panned their [illegible] without fear—and the world lived on as before.

(Continued on page nineteen.)

3 YEARS TO PAY
For the Sweet Toned
MEISTER PIANO
30 Days Free Trial
We Pay the Freight
You are not asked to deposit, or pay or advance a cent in any way until you write us and say that the MEISTER is entirely satisfactory and you wish to keep it. Then these are the terms of sale:
$1 a Week or $5 a Month
No Interest on Payments
No cash payments down. No extras of any kind. Piano stool and cover free. Sold direct from the maker to you and we guarantee it a lasting 25 years. Send now for our beautiful Free Catalog in which above offer is fully explained. Our resources exceed $4,000,000.
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300 Candle Power
FREE
To Try at Your Own Home
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Prof. Rug Heath, [illegible] to make [illegible] genuine ABSOLUTELY [illegible]
COSTS 1 CENT A NIGHT
We want one person in each locality to whom we can refer new customers. Take advantage of our [illegible] TRIAL OFFER. Write today. Agents Wanted.
SUNSHINE LAMP CO.
297 Factory Bldg., Kansas City, Mo.

SHAKE INTO YOUR SHOES
Allen's Foot-Ease, the antiseptic powder for the instant relief of painful, smarting, tender, nervous feet. It takes the sting out of corns and bunions. Simply shake the contents of one of the small envelopes in each shoe. Over 100,000 packages are being used by the German and Allied troops at the front. Sold everywhere, 25c

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Write for our big catalog. FREE. Would you like to organize a band? Write for full information and tell us what instrument you are interested in.
LYON & HEALY
35-49 Adams St., Chicago

Tobacco Habit
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Forever
[illegible]
Herbs Pharmacal Co., Dept. 49 St. Louis, Mo.

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Any Lady May Do It At Home—Costs Nothing To Try.

Every Woman in the World May Save Some Drunkard.
At last, drunk no more, no more. A treatment that is tasteless and odorless, safe, absolutely so; heartily indorsed by temperance workers; can be given secretly by any lady in tea, coffee or food; effective in the silent work—the craving for liquor relieved in thousands of cases without the drinker's knowledge, and against his will. Will you try such a remedy if you can prove its effect, free to you? Then send the coupon below for a free trial package, today.
Free Trial Package Coupon
Dr. J. W. Haines Company,
6643 Glenn Bldg., Cincinnati, Ohio
Please send me, absolutely free, by return mail, in plain wrapper, so that no one can know what it contains, a trial package of Golden Remedy to prove that what you claim for it is true in every respect.
Name [illegible]
Address [illegible]

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Send Your Name for Free Cloth Samples and Catalog
You'll find more than three times the satisfaction and value in Milton F. Goodman Triple Shirts. Most perfect made. All Jumbo sizes. Most perfect fit. All colors in fine fabrics. Guaranteed to wear longer, look better, fit better, wash better. Never was a more perfect one-dollar shirt. Rigid inspection to your protection. Read the
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Reliance Mfg. Co., Dept. 9, Chicago, Ill. "Makers of 234 Best Work Shirt Styles in Earth"
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Sold by 14,000 Dealers
Note Triple Stitch
"Bright Eyes" 25c
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Classified Want Ads

Classified Want Ad Information

The rate for one insertion in Chicago Ledger and one insertion in The Saturday Blade is 30 cents a word, minimum 14 words, less 3% for cash. Each initial and group of figures is counted as a word, and the name and address are also counted. This is the minimum rate; neither more nor less is charged, irrespective of size of ad or number of insertions. An ad may appear in both publications of the same week, or in the Blade of one week and the Ledger of the next

W. D. BOYCE CO., Publisher, 500 N. Dearborn St. CHICAGO, ILL.

SALESMAN WANTED

PROVE YOUR IDENTITY AT BANKS, ETC., with photo-identification enclosed in fine leather pocketbook—comes with new $2,000 accident Insurance policy—costs $6 a year—plus pays for sickness and injury. Double benefits $10 a year. Agents wanted—high commission. Address Underwriters, 1346 Insurance Exchange, Chicago.

WANTED—CHRISTIAN SALESMEN FOR state representatives and general agents. Attractive specialty with a national reputation. Big money makers. Act quick for choice territory. Messenger Co., 22 Quincy St., Chicago.

SALESMEN CLEAR $14.00 ON EACH ORder for our pure perfumed deals. Address Richmond Bros., 4347 Adams St., Chicago.

AGENTS WANTED

AGENTS—NEW MIGHTY MONEY MAKING marvel. World sized selling convincing clothes washing crystal. Clothes washing ideas revolutionized. Positively abolishes rubbing washboards, washing machines—women astounded, wild with joy. Sells like wildfire. $1,000 guarantee goes with it; make $50 to $150 weekly easy. Exclusive territory, no experience necessary; credit granted; cash in business, supply customers; perfect profits, nature's mighty elements do work. Hurry! Write today—get everything sent prepaid, free. Equitable Corporation, Dept. 272, 215-217 W. Superior, Chicago.

$1,000 PER MAN PER COUNTY—STRANGE invention startles world—agents amazed. Send a farmer, old, young, man, woman, lad, lass, child, $2,200 in 14 days. Schleicher, a minister, $54 first week. Write for cash, credit, inside, paid, banked by Stoneman running water bath equipment for any home at only $6.50. Self-heating, sizzling-hot. Waterworks required. Investigate. Exclusive sale. Credit given. Send name, address letter or postal today. Allen Mfg. Co., 4073 Allen Bldg., Toledo, Ohio.

AGENTS ARE MAKING BIG MONEY SELLing our combination electric lamp and lantern to their friends and in their neighborhood. Absolutely safe, no flame—cheap and easy to operate. Two cent stamp brings full particulars. Write today. Federal Sign System, Electric Tower Bldg., Lake St., Chicago.

DON'T BE AN AGENT—OWN YOUR OWN business. We furnish complete, practical, new price outfits for making gold, silver, copper, nickel, etc. We furnish results or dollars; trade secrets; no big, easy, profit enormous. Send today for particulars. Gray & Co., Plating Works, 745 Gray Bldg., Cincinnati, Ohio.

SILVER PLATED, SELF-FILLING PEN. No dropper required. Fills itself in a jiffy. No muss, fingers. Dip pen in ink, reservoir fills instantly. Lasts months. Agents wanted everywhere. Quick sales, big profits. Sample ten cents, postpaid free. Ed. H. Irwin, Box 1292, Carthage, Mo.

AGENTS—SELL RICH-LOOKING IMPORTED 36x48 rugs 11 each. Others sold in 4 days. Profit $57. You can do same. Write for sample offer. Rugs Importing Co., 1237 W. 35th pla rug by parcel post prepaid. Rugs Importing Company, Chicago.

BILLY SUNDAY'S MESSAGE AUTHORIZED. We will pay you $10.00 to distribute it in your neighborhood. $6.00 cash deposit opportunity for one woman. Spare time may be used. Particulars address Secretary, Universal Bible House, 648 Winston Bldg., Philadelphia.

AGENTS—AIR CELL WASHING MACHINE. New, marvelous invention washes work of washers costing $25.00 and up. Sells only $10.00. No washer equal to it. Sells itself, wins territory free. Nearly 200% profit. Write today. Air Cell Washer Co., 3025 Detroit Ave., Toledo, Ohio.

MEXICAN DIAMONDS EXACTLY RESEMble genuine; same fire and brilliancy; stand tests; sell on sight. We need few more live agents. Profits 100 to 300%. Write us; we'll quick for sample case offer free. Mex. Diamond Importing Co., 1658 Wilson Avenue, N. S.

AGENTS—MAKE $100.00 NEXT WEEK. You can. Others do. New invention. Washes white bolling hot. Harmless. Operates own by hand. Forces 20 streams suds through clothes. Outsells 10 to 1. Credit given. Write quick. Globe Washing Machine Works, Cincinnati.

PORTRAITS, CRAYON AND PASTELLO PIEtures, lifelike, luminous crayolo, photo plates, frames, easel pictures, picture cards; framed etc. Lowest prices; reports credited; prompt shipments; 3 days' profitable catalog and samples free. Jas. C. Ballard, 1000 Ballard Bldg., Louisville, Ky.

BILLY SUNDAY—THE MAN AND HIS "Old Message." Greatest book ever sold for good man or woman in each county to make big money selling this great and authentic book. Write for special offer. Star Publishing Co., 1 Washington Ave., Chicago.

U. S. GOVERNMENT USES RICHMOND EXtinguishers that kill gasoline fires. Four sizes; prices, $5.00 to $20.00. Agents make 100% profit. Auto free. Richmond Chemical Co., Room 72, Waverly, Chicago.

400% PROFIT, EVERGRIP GLIDERS, NO rollers, protect stockings from garter attach. Cost 2c sell 15c. Sample 10c. Evergrip Co., 4 Warren St., N. Y.

AGENTS—GREATEST OPPORTUNITY EVER offered. Our catalog explains. Oriental Co., Dept sell at sight. Full-size samples of both, postpaid. Big Commission. Big Company. Dallas, Texas.

AGENTS—GET PARTICULARS OF ONE OF the best paying investments ever put on the market. Something no one else sells. Make $4,000 yearly. Address Dept. 1, Publishers' Mgr., 512 Third St., Cincinnati, O.

LARGE MANUFACTURER WANTS RELIAble men and women to sell advanced hosiery, underwear, shirts, etc., to homes. Big profits. Steady work. Write for $1.00 line free. Madison Mills, 586 Broadway, New York City.

NEW BRANCH MANAGERS FOR ONLY world-wide mail-order business. Operate from your home. Spare time. Too should make $50 weekly. Experience unnecessary; we teach you. $20 Partnership. Outfit free.

WILL PAY RELIABLE MAN OR WOMAN $12.50 to distribute 100 free pkgs. perfumed borax powder among friends. No money required. B. W. Ward and Company, 218 Irving Place, Chicago.

MEN—WOMEN—ALL TOWNS; BIG PAY for packing for my big firm. Address Racora, Dept. 72, Washington, D. C.

AGENTS WANTED—(Continued)

AGENTS—900 PER CENT PROFIT; GOLD and silver sign letters for store and office windows. Any one can put on. Write today for free sample and catalog. Metallic Sign Co., 816 N. Clark, Chicago.

AGENTS—$5.10 GOLD FRAMED SIGNS $ for all merchants. 5c, sell 25c. Big hit. 24x28 Gold Framed Art Pictures 12c, sell 50c. Portraits, Pillow Tops, Cabinet Work. Low prices. Peoples Portrait, Dept. A, Chicago.

IF WE HAD 100 ADDRESS MULTI SHOW you how to earn $25, not one week, but weekly. Send 10c for samples. Money back if you want it. Mfg. Co., 417 Warren St., New York.

YOU CAN SELL OUR RAINCOATS. ANYone will buy. We give you one. Outfit free. Sample Raincoat Co., Box 221, Temple ton, Mass.

HARD TIMES? NO. $7.00 A DAY, STRAIGHT and sure. Something entirely new. Write contract and mailing, and $1.50 sample free. Address, Novelty Co., Dept. 1, Chicago.

2.00% PROFIT—EVERY WOMAN BUYS. Big seller quick; 5-cent size sent for 10 cents. Gold Way Mfg. Co., 115 Dearborn Street, Chicago.

$25.00 PER WEEK AND EXPENSES TO $ travel appointing agents for us. Send stamp. Top, Canvas Work, Chicago.

AGENTS—MAKE MONEY. SEND 25C GET- ting our plan and proposition. Thomas Miller, Derby, Ark.

HELP WANTED

CHIROPRACTIC DOCTORS MAKE LARGE C incomes; our graduates earn $3,000 to $5,000 yearly; thorough course by mail or personal; only big paying profession easily learned in few months; diploma granted; text-books furnished free. American University, Dept. 1, 1416 Kimball Hall, Chicago.

MEN AND WOMEN OVER 18 WANTED— M $65.00 to $150 month. U. S. Government jobs. Common education. Write immediately for list of positions open to you. Franklin Institute, Dept. 8170, Rochester, N. Y.

$5 WEEKLY COLLECTING NAMES AND addresses. Spare time; exclusive territory. Baltimore, Md.

WE PAY $25 EACH FOR FARMERS wanted. Send dime for contract. Bun. Leroy, Mich.

MALE HELP WANTED

FREE ILLUSTRATED BOOK TELLS OF about 300,000 protected positions in U. S. service. Thousands of vacancies each year. Many at big chance here for you, sure and generous pay, short hours, vacation. Just ask for booklet W-32. No obligation. Earl Hopkins, Washington, D. C.

GOVERNMENT RAILWAY MAIL POST Office, rural carrier examinations coming soon. Get prepared by former Government clerk; instructions free. Arthur Patterson, Rochester, N. Y.

$5 TO $60 PER WEEK AND PAID TACKING signs. Write quick. Sure Sign System, 83 Sand 6c stamps for price list paid secure territory. Sheridan Co., 1 Sheridan Block, Indianapolis, Ind.

FIREMEN, BRAKEMEN WANTED; ALL railroads; $120 monthly. Experience unnecessary. Write Railway Association, care 756 Saturday Evening Post, Chicago.

RAILWAY MAIL CLERKS WANTED—COMmence $1,000 year. Examinations soon. Sample questions free. Franklin Institute, Dept. 8170, Rochester, N. Y.

GOVERNMENT EXAMINATIONS—THOROough instruction, $5. Returned if not appointed. Franklin Institute, Dept. 8170, Rochester, N. Y.

SECRET SERVICE OPERATIVES WORK. Secret service operatives work everywhere; be one; big pay, easy work. Write; Fidelity Service, Wheeling, W. Va.

VISITING CARDS

AGENTS TO TAKE ORDERS FOR HIGH class visiting and business cards. Send territory and sample book, free. L. Parsons, Cor. 10th and Arch Streets, Philadelphia.

SONG POEMS WANTED

SONG POEMS WANTED FOR PUBLICAtion. Past experience unnecessary. Our opposition positively unequalled. Send us your song poems or melodies today or write for interesting booklet—it's free. Marks-Goldsmith Co., Dept. 72, Washington, D. C.

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A RARE OPPORTUNITY MAKE COMFORTable by hiring home sewing plain cloth seams. Any sewing machine. Steady. No canvassing. Send stamp for full particulars. Send 10c for sample. Returned if not satisfactory. Home Sewers Co., Jobbers Sewing Co., Rahoweh, Delaware

LADIES—$12 WEEKLY MAKING PLAIN aprons at home; we pay your goods delivered; steady work; complete information, particulars, full-sized apron 25c. Tiger Mfg. Co., 414 Reserve Building, Kansas City, Mo.

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LADIES TO SEW AT HOME FOR A LARGE firm. Woman with good money; steady work; no canvassing; send stamped envelope for particulars. Dept. 54, Walnut St., Philadelphia, Pa.

LADIES—MAKE SHIELDS AT HOME, $10 per 100; steady work; no canvassing. All stamped-addressed envelope for particulars. Dept. 54, Walnut St., Philadelphia, Pa.

WANTED—APRON MAKERS. SEND 15 cents for sample. Standard Kenwood Mfg. Co., 4445 St., Chicago, Ill.

AGENTS WANTED—FEMALE

LADIES: GET OUR BIG FREE CAP AND Apron offer. The liveliest seller ever known; sells at sight in every home; 100% profit; coin money. Send your name and address this minute. Women's Supply Co., 306 S. Franklin St., Chicago, Illinois.

FOR MEN

FREE—TO INTRODUCE OUR STANDARD 5-drawer razor hone and secure agents, will send one gold plated razor hone, with 5 drawers, for 25c. Send gold plated razor hone with parcel post prepaid. Address Thomas & Co., Toledo, Ohio.

FARM LANDS

FREE GOVERNMENT LANDS—MILLION acres now open to homeseekers; entry in 25 states. Official 112 page book describes every acre in detail; locates them; tells how to file; laws, fees, etc. Price 25c postpaid. Also maps, self guiding. Postpaid 50c. Webb Pub. Co. (Dept. 109), St. Paul, Minn.

BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

$7.50 MAY MAKE YOU $750.00. LOTS IN Orange Grove, Texas, only $1 cash, $1 monthly before co-operative plan is withdrawn. Write for full facts today before offer is withdrawn. Write quick. Mission Fruit Land & Improvement Oil Co., 407 Carter Bldg., Houston, Texas.

IF INTELLIGENT, YOU MAY EARN $25 weekly writing show cards; training or experience unnecessary. Particulars free. Detroit Show Card System, 71 Temple, Detroit.

$10 INVESTMENT IN LAND AND CO-operative oil well may make $1,000; payments $10 monthly. Booklet free. Address Texas-Gulf Co., 725 Union Bank, Houston, Texas.

EVERY READER OF THE LEDGER OUGHT to read these ads. Every week splendid chances to make money—not a gold brick scheme, but a way or exchange goods or services are offered here.

WANTED—NAMES AND ADDRESSES. ALL nationalities. Send dime for contract. Directory, 9460 Cottage Grove Ave., Chicago.

COINS, STAMPS, ETC.

BUFFALO NICKELS—$27 EACH PAID FOR them and Lincoln pennies dated 1909 S. Send 4c for coin paying these prices for these coins. We also pay premiums on all rare coins. Send 4c for our 1915 Coin Book, giving full particulars. Clarke Coin Co., Inc., Coin Dealer, Dept. 56, Newton, Iowa.

OLD COINS WANTED.

$50.00 PAID FOR 1873 S. MINT; $2.00 FOR no arrows. Watch your change. Look up your old money; you may have it or coins of premium value. Don't let a valuable coin slip by you. Send 4c today for only list of what we buy and our large illustrated coin circular. It may mean much large profits to you. You certainly have nothing to lose. Send now to Numismatic Bank, Dept. 24, Fort Worth, Texas.

BOYS AND GIRLS

$—BOYS AND GIRLS—$. WE SEND $2 worth of goods. Sell goods, return only $1 when sold. Walker & Dawson, Marlow, Okla.

NAMES WANTED

5¢ FIRMS THAT BUY NAMES, 25C; FIRM to whom I sold 150,000 names, 50c. H. A. Lorberg, Portsmouth, Ohio.

HONEY.

BEST QUALITY NEW CLOVER HONEY, 60 pound can $3.45, two or more cans $3.30 each. Sample 10 cts. Price List Free. M. V. Facey, Preston, Minn.

MOTION PICTURE ACTING

JOIN MOVIES; AMATEURS LIST IN 1915 directory 3c per word. Emporium Studio Lake Geneva, Wis.

ASTROLOGY

FREE! $1.00 LIFE HOROSCOPE. TELLS about love, marriage, health, all affairs of life. Send name, birth date, 6c stamps. Secretary, 1040 B L Security Building, Chicago.

TYPEWRITERS

TYPEWRITER PRICES SMASHED. "SPOT Cash" Gaston will save you money. L. C. Smiths, Olivers, Remingtons, Underwoods, etc., your choice of 140 machines $16.00 to $15.00. Guaranteed for 3 years. Write today for descriptive circular. Dearborn Typewriter Exchange, Dept. 384, Chicago, Ill.

PERSONAL

LONELY YOUNG WIDOW AGE 21, WEIGHT 135, owns nice comfortable home, $20 acre wheat land, near Pacific coast, worth $30,000. Income $1,000 yearly, also large bank account; good disposition, easy to get along with, will marry man with bright, honorable, ambitious and capable of managing property successfully. Will exchange for any man answering quick, enclosing some picture. Address Widow 346, Farmington, Wash., D. C. (General deliveries not answered.)

DO YOU LIKE "REAL THRILLING" BOOKS of white slavery, etc.? Send dime "Thrilly" book, catalog and particulars of unlisted samples of "Bewitching Female Beauty" Cabinet of Oriental Secrets and Book of "Fascinating Goods." You'll want more after seeing them. Write Wilson Novelty Co., 2710 North Dearborn, Chicago.

BE AN EXPERT AT CHARACTER FROM your handwriting. Mind you get a good reading from one who can help you in love, health, business, and financial affairs. Price $1.00. Money back if dissatisfied. H. G. Beauchamp, 2582 5th Ave., New York City.

PIMPLES, PUSTULES, RED NOSE, ACNE positively cured; guaranteed. Latest, all disfigurement removed—even the scars—natural complexion restored. Free. Dr. Rodgers, 26 W. Randolph St., Chicago.

MARRY RICH—BIG LIST OF DESCRIPtions of rich ladies and gentlemen who wish to marry. Sealed. Either sex. Standard Union, Box 1, Minneapolis, Minn.

MARRY—MARRIAGE DIRECTORY WITH photos and descriptions free. Pay when married. Select Introduction Club, Dept. 1170, Kansas City, Mo.

MARRIAGE PAPER WITH PHOTOS AND descriptions of ladies and gents, many rich, want to marry. Free. H. Jahn, St. Paul, Minn.

LOVINE PERF. POWDER WINS LOVERS. Patented. Perfume guaranteed. Lasting, anybody. Sealed 20c. Union Box 10, Paterson, N. J.

MAKE FRIENDS AND SWEETHEARTS EVerywhere. Receive postcards from everyplace. Particulars and sample 10c. Cupid's Co., Box 1, Lake, Ind.

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TWO BEAUTIFUL PHOTOGRAPHS OF FEMALE loveliness. Hot ones! Price 10c. Curtis Publishing Co., Chicago.

MARRY—FREE PHOTOS PRETTY GIRLS. Descriptions and directory. New Plan Co., Dept. 1, Kansas City, Mo.

"SHE," DANDY BOOK, 25C. FOUR PHOTO Catalogue, 3c. Paul Duff, 3713 Missouri, Chicago.

MARRY—BIG PAPER WITH ALL NAMES, descriptions and photos, 10c. Box 2265 B, Kansas City, Mo.

HOT! FOUR BEAUTIFULLY COLored nude bathing girls, actress 25c. Pendennis, Terre Haute, Ind.

MARRY—FREE—SEND DIME, BIRTH date, stamped-addressed envelope and three photos. Cupid's Exchange, Kansas City, Mo.

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SHAPELY FRENCH CORSET MODELS AS worn. Two, 25c. Seven, 50c. Summer Catalog, 10c. Ltd.

GENTLEMEN! 10,000 LADIES WISH TO CORrespond with you. Membership 10c. Curtis Club, Toledo, Ind.

MARRIAGE PAPER FREE; BEST PUBlished; no more results; reliable. Eastern Agency 55, Bridgeport, Connecticut.

FUTURE TOLD; ALSO PAST; EXPLAINED in letter. Send 10c. Pay, $7.00 Mailset Co., Chicago.

MARRIED—BEST MATRIMONIAL paper published. Sealed free. Correspondence, Toledo, Ohio.

FREE—GIRLS, WEAK, RUN DOWN. Write today for a trial package of Hero, the wonderful upbuilding tonic. M. Co., Sealed Co., 512 Third St., Cincinnati, O.

MARRY—CATALOGUE WITH PHOTOS AND descriptions of rich, refined. Sealed. Club, Dept. 674, Tekonsha, Mich.

JOIN THE BEST CLUB FIRST, MEMBERship application 10c. Curtis Club, Toledo, Lucas House, Ind.

MARRIAGE PAPER FREE WITH NAMES AND addresses of 1,200 ladies for 50c and stamp. Mrs. Chandrau, S. D.

MARRY FOR WEALTH AND HAPPINESS. Reliable paper; photos free. Messenger, 914, Kansas City, Mo.

BE SUCCESSFUL, DEVELOP MAGNETIC force, power, control. Free booklet. Wm. Atkinson, 1208 N. Otto St., Dept. 1, Chicago.

FASCINATO" WINS YOUR SWEETHEART. Package with present, 10c. G. Schoenfeld, 28 Ave., Brooklyn, Texas.

LOVE RACHET POWDER WINS LOVERS; charming, fascinating; sealed, 25c. R. B. Stern, Grand Rapids, Mich.

"LOVERS' EXTRACT," MARVELOUS, POWerful. Guaranteed harmless. Sealed, one dime. Scientific Extract Co., Akron, Ohio.

LOVERS' SACHET WINS YOUR SWEETheart without delay. Powder and its "Se- cret" 25c. Birth, Stone $1. Reward, N. Y.

CLASSIFIED WANT ADS

MOTION PICTURE PLAYS

WE CAN SHOW YOU HOW TO SELL YOUR photoplays, stories and ideas. Quick, profitable sales. Model playplays and criticisms free. No courses or revision. Proof free. Manuscript Sales Co., Box 460, Harrisburg, Pa.

WRITE MOVING PICTURE PLAYS—$50 each. Correspondence course unnecessary. Details free. Atlas Publishing Co., 244, Cincinnati.

MOVING PICTURE BUSINESS.

$50 PROFIT NIGHTLY, SMALL CAPITAL secures. Experience needed. We teach you and furnish everything. Atlas Moving Picture Company, Caxton Building, Chicago.

BOOKS

"FROM THE BALL ROOM TO HELL" mailed anywhere 25c. L. S. Muncy, 138 E. Pleasant Ave., Syracuse, N. Y.

THESE WANT ADS CHANGE EACH WEEK

New offers come and go—old offers change—something new and different in each issue.

READ THEM THIS WEEK AND OFTEN

Aaron Lapwing's Genius.

(Continued from page three.)

and beat frantically upon the glass. The glass did not yield in the least, but the receiver did. It came apart in two pieces in Rodney's hands.

He stopped and thought. He was sure now that Aaron Lapwing was planning to let him stifle there. Evidently the wires were disconnected, and Lapwing had known it.

Rodney raged round the booth. He set his raw shoulder against the paneling and tried to smash it down. But, though the wood creaked and groaned, it held it. He was trapped as helplessly as a rat in a cage.

He drew in the foul air until it seemed as though his chest would burst. His heart was hammering, and his ears were ringing as though each held a chime of bells. And then the thought of death came home to Roddy, and he stood still in front of the wrecked telephone instrument and tried to gather his wits together.

Click!

The door was open. A gust of wind, delicious as he had never thought wind could be, blew in, clearing the miasma from his lungs and the gathering clouds of stupor from his brain.

Roddy spun round and peered into the darkness, inhaling a chestful of air, and another, and another.

"Lapwing!" he called. "Lapwing! What in thunder do you mean by——"

He got no further, for out of the darkness a heavy sack descended on him, bearing him to the ground. A gag was thrust between his teeth into his mouth. Something like a net descended over his head and was caught about his waist. It seemed to him that there were several men in the party, and the more he fought, the more he became entangled, until he was rolled into as tight a ball as the Princess in her draperies.

He could not utter a sound, and, helpless as a bat, he lay still, glaring into the darkness above him. If looks could have killed——

But his assailants were proof against all but bullets. He heard them whispering in some unknown language. Evidently these were Prince Hiroki's retainers, and for some reason with which only Aaron was acquainted, his destruction had been resolved upon. It was a case of the "innocent bystander" with a vengeance.

Suddenly his arm was seized and he felt a sharp sting in the upper part of the biceps. At first he thought it was a dagger wound, designed to sever some large artery and produce swift and certain death. Then he understood.

An irresistible drowsiness stole over his limbs. He no longer felt the gag in his mouth. He no longer wanted to fight, to struggle, to do anything but sleep. And he did not care whether he awoke or not.

The prick had been that of a hypodermic needle, and its contents a large quantity of morphine.

And Roddy, as a good newspaper man, fell asleep, murmuring the word "telephone."

Next week's Ledger will contain further chapters of this remarkable story. You will miss a great treat if you do not read it to the end. We will take on constantly the very best stories of entertainment that we can find. Send in your subscription and take the Ledger regularly, if you are not doing so. You will not regret it.

* * *

Buster's Talent.

"Is Buster in bed?" asked Randall as he sat down to his dinner. "Has he been today: all right?" Randall always enjoys a report regarding Buster on those nights when he comes home too late to question his 6-year-old son himself.

"He's in bed after rather a naughty day," replied Mrs. Randall, smiling.

"Well, you appear to have enjoyed it."

"Yes, I have some, but I was just grining, dear, at a thought that had suddenly come to me. You know you're always worrying about a profession for Buster? Well, I think he's shown today that he has a special aptitude for a particular calling. You won't have to choose one for him after all, perhaps."

"When I called him in to lunch today he was playing down at the corner with some other youngsters and he paid no attention to me at all. I called and called. I know that he heard me perfectly, but he never made a move toward home. In fact, he kept his back toward me. I came in and closed the door, determined to give him a lesson. In about twenty minutes he came up the steps and looked through the window at me a bit anxiously. I sat still, giving no sign of having noticed him.

"'Mother,' he called: 'mother, let me in.' I remained calmly beneath. 'Mother, aren't you going to let me in?' he demanded tearfully and I continued deaf to his appeals until he began to pound and kick the door. Then I rose slowly and went to him.

"'Who are you?' I asked.

"'Why, I'm your little boy, Buster,' he answered.

"'Oh, no, you aren't my little boy,' I told him. 'My son comes when he is called.'

"'But, mother, I am your little boy.'

"'I have a good little boy,' I maintained stoutly, although it was difficult in the face of his distress. 'He comes.'

"'Anyway, I'm awfully hungry. I might starve,' he sobbed.

"'Well, come and have something to eat. I wouldn't let any little boy go hungry.'

"'Honest, can I have something to eat?'

"'Of course you may. Come right in, little boy. You may go upstairs and wash. Turn to the left at the top and you'll see the place where my son washes.' He gave me a strange look and marched upstairs.

"In a moment he appeared at the head of the stairs and called down to me that there's no soap in there. Don't your little boy have to use soap?

"'Certainly,' I replied and supplied the lack. After a while he came down with an unusually wild and tousled countenance and round front. He sat down demurely on the bench in the hall, where he stayed until I called him to lunch.

"'I'll let you use my little boy's knife and fork and silver cup,' I said. 'I suppose you aren't used to such nice things.'

"'No, ma'am,' said Buster. 'I haven't any home or father or mother or anything. I'm an orphing and live in a dry goods box.'

"'You do!' I couldn't help exclaiming.

"'Yes, ma'am, and I don't even have jam or jelly on bread or cake. I'm not that, never. I guess you don't give little stranger boys like me cookies or cake, do you?'

"I had intended to let him eat a very plain lunch as part of the punishment, but I couldn't resist such a pathetic appeal, and I brought out the jam that I keep, and I let him put the cream and sugar on his cereal. He ate it with a large spoon. He drank two cups of cocoa and had cut a large piece of the fresh cake I had baked in the morning.

"'Thank you, missus,' he said, after he had eaten very heartily. 'I'll go back to my dry goods box now.'

"I remarked that it looked like rain and said I should be glad to have him stay and enjoy my little boy's toys. He accepted the invitation very formally and asked me how to start his wind-up engine and mechanical mill, just as if he had never seen them before. Never once during the entire afternoon has he admitted by word or look that he was ever in this house before.

"I gave him an early dinner," continued Mrs. Randall, "and when he thanked me for that he said he'd better be going, but I told him that my little boy wasn't here to play with and as well stay all night. When I sent him in I tried to get him to own he was Buster, but not a bit of it! He feigned complete ignorance of what I was driving at. What do you think of that."

"I think if he should appear to bring his young big sister to-morrow I'll disown Randall and he ran upstairs.

He came down a moment later laughing. "I leaned over him and just lightly patted him, for his eyes were closed, but he opened them and slowly closing one said drowsily, 'I'm sleeping in your little boy's bed, mister.'

"'And what did you say?'

"I just said, 'That's all right,' and to make yourself at home,' and then I kissed him and left him. I get you on the profession, dear, Buster has histrionic talent."

* * *

Digging for Money.

The workman was digging.

The wayfarer of the inquisitive turn of mind stopped for a moment to look on.

"Mornin'," said the wayfarer at length, "what are you digging for?"

The workman looked up.

"Money!" ejaculated the amazed wayfarer. "And when do you expect to strike it?"

"Saturday," replied the workman, and resumed operations.

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Chicago Ledger

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COPIES WEEKLY.

GENTLE JABS

The right side of politics is the inside.

The life insurance agent for a busy tongue.

Success comes to the man who does not fear failure.

Love is blind; therefore it fails to see the danger signals.

Fools optimism rush in and win while wise men investigate.

Adam had his faults, but he was never sued for breach of promise.

A double spendthrift is one who wastes both his time and his money.

Occasionally the preacher's aim is inaccurate and his sermon hits you.

Too many people spend yesterday what they were going to save tomorrow.

If ignorance were bliss most of us would be so happy we should choke.

After marrying in haste a poor man has to hustle during his leisure.

Wealth may not bring happiness, but it eases the bill collector many steps.

Some people are as quick as powder and others are as slow as cold molasses.

One kind of a hero is a man who tells his wife the truth, first, last and always.

For every fault we find in our neighbor we overlook a dozen of more in ourselves.

Earthly angels are all right, but there isn't much excitement in being married to one.

Sometimes a man is considered eccentric because he attends strictly to his own business.

Probably once in about 4,000 years a man who is licked in a fair fight has no excuse to offer.

It's easy to gauge a man's intelligence. Draw him into a discussion, and if he agrees with you he's sensible.

Many a man who boasts that he isn't a hypocrite is so disagreeable that his acquaintances may wish he was.

The first woman handed the first man an apple, but her daughters have been handing men lemons ever since.

The average woman likes to talk about her neighbors almost as well as the average man likes to talk about himself.

However, the city chap who imagines he could get rich raising chickens on a two acre farm may be perfectly sane on all other subjects.

The happy wife is not a woman who has married the best man on earth, but one who is philosophical enough to make the best of what she's got.

Home and Health

Fashion Notes.

Colored handkerchiefs are the latest fad. Made in fine linen to match the costume, if the color is light; to go with evening gowns the handkerchiefs must be vivid, such as red, orange, green, or purple. They are made of an exquisite quality of linen and hemstitched, the hems being about a quarter of an inch wide. The monogram is worked in a color in darker shade than the handkerchief.

Every one is asking now whether or not the initial idea in fabrics is to be generally accepted this spring, whether or not it is safe to introduce it on the new frocks which one is having made. One thing is certain, the full straight skirt is a safe model. It is here to stay for a while and no woman need be afraid to have some of her gowns at any rate made up along these lines. One model in the one-skirt is full and shirred on to a cord at the waist. A model revived from the gowns worn a quarter of a century ago is made of changeable taffeta silk. The skirt is shirred over three cords at the knees and at the bottom of the gown and halfway between. Still another style is shirred far enough down at the bottom to give effect of a deep flounce, then at yoke depth and once more halfway between.

For the Housewife.

Nothing makes a finer polish for the piano than sweet oil and alcohol. Use a little of each, but it is to be grilled, remember that it is to be sweet oil and not machine oil. Apply with a soft cloth. A woman of experience will not put on the platter just before serving, but will let the meat stand for a few minutes after the surface is well seared and the meat is partly cooked.

There is no need of having dingy looking or stained tinware around the kitchen when you can produce the shine of newness at little trouble by first boiling them in water to which has been added the ordinary quantity of borax used in any of the dainty soaps. This household indispensable does duty.

To keep piano keys clean and white, dampen a piece of cloth with alcohol and with it rub the keys. If this does not remove the stains, use a piece of cotton flannel dipped with colegne water. The keys can be bleached white by laying over them cotton flannel cloths that have been saturated with a solution of oxalic acid.

Clean patent leather shoes with a sponge and warm water. Warm the leather with gentle heat, but take care not to get it too hot, and apply sweet oil or olive oil with a woolen cloth or an equal quantity of turpentine. Apply the oil with a sponge or cloth and rub with the palms of the hands, first of the hands well warm. Apply ordinary blacking to the edges of the soles, or liquid varnish blacking with a sponge brush, but do not apply paste or liquid blacking to patent leather.

Health Notes.

For sore throat gargle with salt water or a strong antiseptic wash. Apply cold cloths around the throat, wrung and wrapped closely about the throat. Cover with dry cloths so that no moisture reaches the air. As the bandage dries and becomes warm, quickly renew.

Are throats are so treacherous that when they are inflamed relief cannot be best to seek immediate medical aid.

There is nothing like a hot foot bath to tranquilize the nervous system after a siege of prolonged study, literary labor or other intellectual activity at night. The bath should be taken at night, for about ten or twelve minutes, before going to bed, and the water should be as hot as can be borne. The nervous become well over the ankles. It will cause the blood vessels in the feet to fill, and afford almost instant comfort and soothing effect as it withdraws blood pressure from the overstimulated brain. This induces relaxation of the nerves and mental tension, quieting the nervous system, so that sleep is promoted. It is necessary to keep the feet in the hot water the temperature at which it can be borne for at least ten minutes, by adding hot water as the temperature of the foot bath becomes lower.

Recipes.

SPICE CAKE—Beat slightly the yolks of two eggs and one whole egg and add three-fourths of a cupful each of sugar and of sour milk. Put in the flour sifter two cupfuls of flour, one teaspoonful each of ground cloves, cinnamon and mace, and half a teaspoonful of salt. Sift into the liquid, stir, and beat until well mixed. Then add half a teaspoonful of soda dissolved in a tablespoonful of hot water. Bake in three layers in a hot oven for fifteen minutes. For the filling beat whites of eggs to a stiff froth. Pour over them slowly half a cupful of hot maple syrup and beat until thick and cool. Spread between layers and on top.

GINGERBREAD—Beat together two eggs, one cupful of molasses, and half a cupful of sugar. Add a tablespoonful of ginger and a dessert spoonful of cinnamon. Add half a cupful of sour milk and two cupfuls of sifted flour. Dissolve a teaspoonful of soda in one-fourth of a cupful of [illegible] and [illegible] into a [illegible] Bake in a moderate oven [illegible]

For the Kitchen Floors.

The kitchen floor, which needs such constant scrubbing, often causes much trouble, as soap and water soften the wood and leave it rough instead of smoother. If it is splashed much it must be scraped smooth [illegible] then with care it ought to be kept so.

Paint the floor clean and smooth, the cracks filled off a close grained wood, if there be any, then rub in a thoroughly [illegible] oil or one of the special preparations that are manufactured for the purpose.

Oil slowly hardens and darkens a floor, so that grease and stains do not sink into the wood. Varnishes or varnish kitchen or bathroom floors. The slipperiness of the wax may cause a nasty fall, and paint is a waste of money, for the water that has to be used in both kitchen and bathroom will soon [illegible] the varnish off. After the floors are once in good condition it is not a difficult matter to keep them so.

Adhesive Plaster.

Adhesive plaster has many uses other than the original one for which it was intended, that is, healing bodily wounds. It can be used for repairing all sorts of rubber articles, such as hot water bottles, atomizers, syringes, garden hose, rubber shoes, boots and gloves. It should be used by applying a warm iron. For mending mittens, knitting, crocheting or hemming by hand, put a small piece over the end of your finger to protect it. A piece will save the lining in the heel of a shoe and prevent it from rubbing the heel into holes. It can be used to mend corsets, and even the ends of protruding stays. If a window pane is cracked in cold weather a strip of warm plaster will hold it together and keep the cold air from coming into the house. Cracks in wooden buckets may be made waterproof by mending with adhesive plaster.

Fancy Needlework.

When making up dress goods or any fancy material, do not throw away even the smallest scraps, but hada box or bag near your work basket to save them in; you will find them convenient for many small articles. The same is true of worn goods, such as gingham, percale and so on; very tiny pieces may be utilized in making quilts by selecting suitable patterns.

A Novel Salad.

A delicious and dainty salad—good at all times—is made by laying a slice of canned Hawaiian pineapples on a lettuce leaf. Heat a knife and spread cream or Neufchatel cheese over the pineapple, arrange pointed stripe of pimento like [illegible] petals of geranium over the cheese; [illegible] in the center and put a stuffed olive on top.

RECIPE TO DARKEN GRAY HAIR

By a Specialist.

A very satisfactory preparation which darkens gray hair and acts as a corrective agent for dandruff and other diseases of the scalp can be made at small expense and in your own home by dissolving a small box of Barbo Compound in 7 ounces of water and then adding an ounce of bay rum and a quarter ounce of glycerine. Any drug store can furnish these ingredients. This is to be applied once a week until the hair is sufficiently darkened, then every two weeks to keep the hair soft and glossy and the scalp in a healthy condition. It may be used with equal success in darkening the beard. This is a preparation that gives splendid results, both as a hair darkener and a remedy for all scalp disorders, and is well worthy of a trial. You will find it far superior to the ordinary store preparations and much less expensive.

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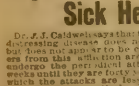

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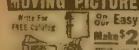

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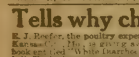

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The End of the World.

(Continued from page fifteen.)

The [illegible] prophecy had said that, if the end did not come on the twenty-[illegible] it might be looked for any time within the next few days, but when the Foskett party had waited five additional days their expectations vanished, and they decided that the world was going to continue just as of old. Captain Foskett kept very quiet regarding this strange disfulfilment of the prophecy, which he had so firmly believed. Whatever his thoughts may have been, we will leave them to themselves, and the others respecting his silence and the blow to his faith, restrained their expressions of amusement and were silent also.

Soon their thoughts turned [illegible] and they longed to be [illegible] but there was an obstacle [illegible] their sloop existed them. The [illegible] that remained were [illegible] sail hands, so how [illegible] Racimo to [illegible] to be called Trouble Island.

It was finally decided that two men should go to Racimo, and, inhabited by civilized persons and try to charter a vessel, but before this step was taken there was a new happening. A sail was sighted to the eastward, and as she was standing toward them she became an object of interest. Was it an honest craft, of which few ever passed near Racimo, or the ship of pirates? All glasses were brought to bear upon her, and as sails bellying stiffly under the touch of the breeze. That meant good speed, and it was decided against her.

Time passed, and it was seen that she was standing directly for the island. Then Foskett was equal to it once more.

"There are two vessels," he announced. "One, following close after the other, probably a dismasted ship is being taken in tow for [illegible]."

Another hour passed, and then Vashti suddenly grew agitated. She had monopolized a big glass for herself, and had been deaf to all words addressed to her, but she suddenly wheeled upon her father.

"Look! she exclaimed. "See that vessel that [illegible]"

Foskett adjusted the glass and looked. Then his face became a panorama of deep emotions. Doubt, uncertainty, incredulity, conflicted. Then, no doubt, were pictured there, one after the other, but when he had gazed further he wheeled upon his daughter.

"Why, that is the old Spry Shark!" he gasped, bewildered.

Silence, then a deep breath, and then a tumultuous cheer.

"It is the skipper repeated, "It's our own brother!"

"But," urged Rider dubiously, "how could she survive the gale and, later, the tidal wave?"

"Providence and chance, my lad. Probably the gale carried her beyond the reach of the tidal wave, and she could survive gales, even when derelict, if the disturbance is not violent."

Dolton was on the shore waving a flag to call for help. Foskett sent a man to urge him to greater exertions and to it was proposed [illegible] stranger to miss seeing them, but as she had been set down as lost with all hands, she resigned on Trouble Island. They began packing for departure.

In due time the vessels came near and an anchor was let go from the leader. Then a boat was lowered, and dipping oars in unison, it shot like a flash toward the land. Foskett and others met them at the water's edge.

Discovery followed. Foskett and the foremost of the newcomers grasped hands, being old acquaintances

"Dan Darby!"

"Bless my soul, Silas Foskett!"

The last speaker was [illegible] astonished, but the latter still [illegible]

Well, mate, I don't understand, but I've got your sloop fast out there, as you may have seen."

"She went adrift. Where did you find her?"

"Making a rocking-horse of herself in quiet waters, a day's sail out yonder I knew she was yours, of course, so I took her in tow, expecting that you would never be called upon to pay salvage for her. That I won't permit. The crew are well."

"The crew?"

"Yes, two monkeys are aboard. Didn't you know that?"

"Two?" cried Vashti. "Now I know that, when she was drifting by, I did see something I dared not claim to see then. Another indeed monkey on deck besides the monkey in the bows. Two! Do you hear, father?"

"I hear, lass, but I'm too much astonished to comprehend. But, Dan, how happen you to be in these waters?"

"I've been searching for a certain Captain Blair, retired skipper of the brig, Quickstep Mary, who has lately been farming on Chichiraga Island. Black pirates recently landed there, and, though his family was away, burned his house, after plundering it. Poor Blair went crazy, and was last seen putting to sea in a little sailboat, alone. I've been hunting, but he must be dead.

"Not a bit of it, Dan. He's with us. Negroes put him ashore from a dropher and then, evidently afraid of him in [illegible] mental affliction, ran away. No doubt they were peaceful, so they must have picked him up from his boat and saved his life. So it was to hunt for him that you fetched to [illegible] waters?"

"Just so."

"You have found more than Blair. We want to get [illegible]

"Thank you [illegible] good old Spry Shark. She's sound below and hardly touched aloft. She is yours again. Slide so take her and welcome."

The old friends grasped hands, but Vashti laughed at something [illegible]

"Surprised, are you?" she [illegible] monkeys object.

"They shall [illegible]

declared Foskett [illegible] dwellers here. They shall h[illegible]

"Dan, I don't want [illegible]

"I do crave [illegible] with my own [illegible]

"You shall go [illegible] boat. The Spry [illegible]

[illegible] that the natives were necessary on [illegible] some [illegible] property was taken [illegible] and [illegible] stowed [illegible] the ship's camp [illegible] ft deserted.

Big Bob Vashti [illegible] and found on one [illegible] he had [illegible] mentioned. Thus, the creature was relatively identified. It had undoubtedly been on Racimo when they first landed. His companion was a female. It could only be inferred that, as Foskett had [illegible] said, the sloop had fetched to the shore of the island to the w[illegible] before the gale and that the two, hearing [illegible] from a tree, had been carried away when the first breath of the gale sent her to [illegible] again.

The pair were liberated, free as rule on Racimo, and to live their lives of plenty where [illegible] other catables dear to them were abundant.

Simultaneously, the two vessels [illegible] were [illegible] and taking him to his family. After a short time the mind-stricken man's [illegible] returned, he gave up tropical life and located in his former home in New England.

"When the Spry Shark stood away from land, Captain Foskett and his family looked [illegible] Blair and [illegible] "I should be perfectly happy," said the skipper gavely, "but for one thing."

"What," asked Vashti, "is that?"

"Before we left our old home I was bantered about my belief in the prophesy of the world's end, and, to show my faith, I deeded away my home for one dollar.

"I don't mind a thought, sir," replied Gideon quickly. "I knew other men were doing just the same thing, and, to prove it, sent the money back to them. I did an hour after you passed the deed [illegible] to me, by agreement, consideration [illegible] to me for the same sum. All that is now needed, sir, is one more deed, and then your home will be yours in fact as well as [illegible] and I'll send [illegible]

Foskett looked hard; then tears filled his eyes. He grasped the doctor's hand warmly, but it was long before he could command his voice sufficiently to utter his thanks. When, finally, it had been done, Vashti gently pressed Gideon's arm.

"You blessed soul!" she breathed softly.

"Wrong!" he replied, smiling. "I was a business venturer, and it was done for business souls. I believed that home would be safe only when every other thing we'd light it—your presence.

As the [illegible] of Racimo grew less distinct in movement and attention. The glass was brought to bear and the two monkeys were seen looking seaward, as if watching the invaders depart, right in the same web of happ[illegible] they were probably hoping never to see visitors again. Perhaps the scarred one of the pair was still brooding slightly over having once been called a thief. It was well for them that the [illegible]

(Continued on page twenty-three.)

A beautiful woman is the most perfect of Gods creations and the world over is the same. Every where Beauty is recognized and adnured. Woman's right to be beautiful should be asserted and in every case where it is not, the woman herself is invariably at fault. A little care and attention at the proper time will tend to keep the bloom of youth and health that so many women lose through their own carelessness and neglect. The skin is naturally smooth and velvety and properly cared for, may be kept in that condition.

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If you [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]

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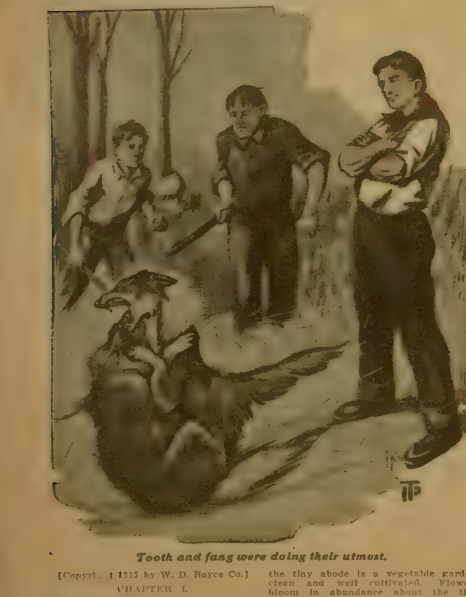
By Annie Brownlee Quimby



Tooth and fang were doing their utmost.

[Copyri., t 1915 by W. D. Boyce Co.]

CHAPTER I.

A THIN spiral of blue smoke rises from the chimney of a cabin, set on a sort of shelf on the side of Bear Ridge. Below, the mountain slopes gradually, till its outer edge is lost in a green, fertile valley. Adjacent to the tiny abode is a vegetable garden, clean and well cultivated. Flowers bloom in abundance about the tiny cabin. Hollyhocks, dahlias, carnations, pinks and masses of velvety pansy faces look up at you from every direction. The front of the little cabin is almost hidden from view by a profusion of ivy and many-colored sweet peas.

The cabin is surrounded by green, sloping meadows, and a tiny orchard lies on one side. A little farther on, a patch of potato and pumpkin vines covers the ground, and the rustling corn leaves are constantly whispering.

A bird in a nearby tree is singing an evening melody, pouring out his soul in song before tucking his head under his wing for the night. A cock crows defiantly, and another answers him just as defiantly. Up on the ridge an owl hoots, and another echoes him from the gulch below.

A red and white cow rattles her horns against the bars and moos softly, plaintively. There is the faint tinkling of a bell, and the bleating of sheep is borne on the still evening air. The sun has dropped down behind the ridge, and a purple haze has settled over mountain and valley.

A woman is standing in the cabin door and gazing wistfully across the orchard to a mound of fresh earth on the hillside beyond. Her face, perhaps thirteen years comes from the cabin, and stands by her side protectingly, and gently caresses her hand.

"Don't cry, mother, dear," the boy is saying. "You've still got me, and I've got you, so we're not just like lonely and alone," he comforted.

"You darling!" the mother cried, and kissed the ruddy cheek. "Yes, mother is thankful for her little Ted," she murmured, striving to banish the tears.

"I've have to be the man of the house, now, since father has gone," the boy replied, a note of responsibility in his voice. "That's what daddy said, wasn't it, mother?"

"Yes, Ted, you're the man of the house now, since father has gone," the mother replied, trying to smile at the boy's earnest face, then, with a sigh, looking across to the hillside where the fresh mound of earth lay.

* * * * *

It is five years since we left Ted and his mother standing by the cabin door, gazing at a fresh mound on a hillside.

Ted is now eighteen, a tall, muscular youth, with clear, honest blue eyes, and his bright face tanned a healthy shade of brown. A profusion of light curly hair is tumbled about his well shaped head. He is a boy good to look at—a manly boy, a boy whom any mother might be proud of.

It might be well in the beginning to say that the names of places given in this story will not be found on any map of Humboldt. But the pioneers and hill people of Southern Humboldt could point them out to you.

The sun is dipping well towards the west, when Ted and Captain come swinging merrily down the mountain side, following an old cattle trail which will bring them to the main road a little farther on. Ted is carrying a dozen trout on a crotched twig, and his fishing pole is laid across his shoulder. Captain is wild with delight, chasing squirrels and chipmunks and giving vent to his joy in a happy dog song. Ted is whistling merrily, and thinking of the fried trout for supper. Captain, with tongue lolling and sides heaving, comes running to Ted's side, and rubs his nose against his master's hand.

"Good boy, Cap," Ted cried, stroking the dog's head. "We must hurry, old boy, or it'll be dark before we get home, and them sheep will have to be brought from the lower pasture." The dog wagged his tail understandingly.

A little farther on, voices could be heard around the bend of the trail. Ted paused to listen, and a frown settled over his face. "It's that dern Mullen tribe, Cap." The dog lifted one forefoot, and looked at Ted with a quizzical whine. "No, Cap, we don't want no scrap with them. They don't fight fair, nohow." The dog's head drooped and his tail hung limp. He understood.

Ted turned aside into the thick underbrush to let the others pass without discovering his presence, but the Mullen dog scented them out and came through the bushes with teeth bared and tail erect, a challenge issuing from every bristling hair. Captain looked pleadingly at Ted, but the latter shook his head.

"Down, Captain, we're not looking for trouble." The dog dropped behind obediently.

The Mullen dog kept coming nearer, growling threateningly, the hair on his back like porcupine quills.

"Get out, Rover. Away with you!" Ted cried, picking up a stick, and shying it at the intruder. But the Mullen dog paid no attention, and kept sidling up to Captain, who looked back at Ted, and whined pleadingly.

There was a giggle from a clump of bushes near the trail, and two boys stepped out. One was apparently a little older than Ted; the other perhaps thirteen.

"Call your dog, Mose!" Ted called to the elder boy.

"What for?" the other called back.

"'Cause there's no sense in letting 'em fight. Call him off!" he said sharply.

"You're afraid!" little Nat chipped in.

"Afraid nothing!" Ted cried angrily. "You know how Captain fights, don't you?"

"You're afraid Rover'll lick your dog, that's all!" the elder boy sneered.

"Captain don't have to care of himself; but I can't see the sense of letting 'em chew each other up."

"Captain don't know you know Captain'll get licked. My dog will eat your dog up, tail and all," the other replied triumphantly.

"All right, then," Ted said, stepping aside and nodding to Captain. "But you'll keep your hands off Cap, Mose Mullen."

By this time the distance between the dogs had narrowed to the width of Ted's legs. Rover, the Mullen dog, Ted's nod, a happy light sprang into the dog's eyes, and his muscles became tense.

"Sick him, Rove!" the Mullen boys cried, with shouts of delight, for their dog had considerable advantage in size.

The dogs needed no second bidding. Over and over on the ground they rolled, first one on top and then the other. Captain was getting pretty rough handling, but it didn't seem to worry him much. The Mullen dog was straining every muscle, and tooth and fang were doing their utmost.

Ted had dropped his trout and pole to the ground, and was sitting on a log, calmly watching the fight. The two Mullen boys were hopping around like jumping-jacks, and shouting encouragement to their dog.

Rover picked Captain up by the back of the neck, and shook him viciously. The Mullen boys clapped their hands and shouted to Rover to eat him up.

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Ted looked uneasy, and rose to his feet to better watch the affray. Rover was beginning to breathe hard, and his sides were working like a bellows, while his footing was less sure. Cap'n showed very little signs of distress and seemed to take the big dog's buffeting easily. Then, all at once, Captain assumed the offensive and sprang for the Mullen dog's throat. Over they rolled on the ground. Rover was showing signs of real distress now; his breath was coming in great gasps, and his legs were bowing to wobbles. Captain gave his first growl, and buried his teeth under Rover's left ear. Ted sat down again, with a satisfied smile. It was Captain's death hold, and he began to shake, first gently, then in vicious jerks. In two minutes Rover had settled to a rag.

The Mullen boys' delight had turned to fear. Their exultation was shortlived.

"Get a stone, Nat," the big Mullen boy cried.

"No, you don't!" Ted broke in, springing to his feet. "I told you you'd keep hands off Cap."

Meanwhile Rover lay limp, and Captain's closed his eyes and held on, with legs braced. He looked as though he might be having a nap. With a curse, the elder Mullen grabbed a piece of dried limb, and rushed towards the dogs.

"No, you don't!" Ted said again, and blocked the other's way. "Say plenty, and I'll take Cap off.

"I'll not!" the other cried. "I'll kill your dog. He don't fight fair." And he made a vicious lunge at Captain's head.

Ted grasped the club and wrenched it from the other, and the two boys rolled in the dirt, one of them, at least, fighting in a fierce battle as the dogs had. Little Nat jumped up and down and cried to Mose to gouge him. It was a rough and tumble fight, but Ted seemed to be taking it in play.

Captain still stood as before, and the thought flashed across Ted's mind that Rover must be dead.

Little Nat was gesticulating wildly, and calling to Mose to eat the Morgans beat up. Mose Mullen lacked Ted's quickness and great muscular strength, and was easily getting the worst of it. It flashed across the boy's mind that Ted was whipping him without even trying, and the thought enraged him, and he sank his teeth into the other's arm. Ted gave a cry of pain and slammed the Mullen boy with his free hand.

"You'd bite, would you?" Ted cried, pinning him to the ground with his knee. "You're like your dog, you're no good. You're just fit to snarl and snap and bite, dog fashion."

With a devilish yell of joy, little Nat rushed at Ted with a stick. But the stick fell harmlessly to the ground. A stone had struck him between the shoulders and sent him sprawling on his face. He picked himself up, half dazed and thoroughly frightened, and was confronted by an angry, dark-eyed girl, who stamped her foot and shook her fist at him.

"Nat Mullen, you little wretch! How dare you strike Ted with that stick!" she panted.

"He set his dog on Rover," the boy replied, half-ashamed.

"He didn't, neither, you lyin' little pig!"

Nat, watchful and bent on revenge, grabbed the stick that Nancy had knocked from his hands, and, before the girl could interfere, the stick, aimed at Ted, struck Mose a glancing blow on the side of the head. Mose relaxed his hold on Ted, and dropped limp to the ground.

"Now, Nat Mullen, see what you've done! Serves you right, too."

Little Nat began to whimper and rub the hollow of one bare foot against the arch of the other. "Did I kill him?" he asked fearfully.

"No, you didn't, more's the pity!" Nancy answered shortly.

Ted bent over Mose, and brushed the damp hair from his forehead, revealing a bruised spot near the temple. A minute later Nancy was bathing Mose's face with water from a nearby spring. The cold water revived him quickly, and he sat up and looked around; then remembrance broke over him.

CHAPTER II.

STRANGELY enough no one thought of the dogs, till Captain rubbed his nose against Ted's hand. Ted looked around in time to see Rover crawling away, with belly dragging, into the bush. The fight was gone from the Mullen boy and the Mullen dog, alike.

"Shake hands, Mose, and let's forget it," Ted said, holding out his hand with boyish frankness.

"Naw, I won't neither. I'll get you for this, Ted Morgan! See if I don't."

"Oh, all right, if you feel that way; but it wasn't me that knocked you out. It was Nat here," jerking his thumb towards the whimpering, dirty-faced, barefooted little Nat.

"Just the same, I'll get you, and I'll get your dog, too," Mose snarled.

"See here, Mose. I was only playing with you. If I'd wanted I could have crushed you in two minutes. See!" and he seized the Mullen boy and raised him above his head, held him thus balanced there with one hand for a minute, then dropped him to the ground, none too gently.

Mose picked himself up slowly, his face a study in wonder and amazement, and a little grudging admiration.

"Gee!" little Nat said, touching the elder Mullen on the shoulder, "that Morgan kid must be an ogre or that one the preacher feller was tellin' us about. You 'member the strong man with the long hair that the woman cut off, and then he wasn't strong at all? Samson, I think he called the feller."

"Yes, I know. But Ted Morgan has no long hair to cut off. I'll get him just the same, though."

When Ted dropped Mose to the ground, he picked up his string of trout and, shouldering his fishing pole, whistled to Captain, and Ted and Nancy followed the old cow trail towards home.

"That good-for-nothin' Mullen tribe!" Nancy began. "It's just like 'em to set on you alone."

"That's nothin'. I ain't afraid of none of them, and neither is Captain. I was afraid I might have to hurt Mose, though. You see, I had to keep from gettin' real mad-like."

"Say, Ted, you're the queerest boy I know," Nancy cried. "If it had been Jim or Jack, now, they'd a-rimmaked Mose good," she continued, unconsciously laying a hand upon his arm. The contact made Ted blush.

"What is it, Ted? Your arm is hurt?"

"It's only a little scratch, I guess," trying to pass it off lightly.

"Let's see!" she insisted.

He laid down the trout and fishing pole, and slowly rolled back his shirt sleeve, revealing a torn, discolored spot on his arm about the size of a silver dollar. Nancy raised it closely, then she raised her eyes to his face, and looked at him curiously.

"Mose bit you," she said in a queer voice, and Ted nodded. "And you let him do that?" she cried disgustedly.

"I didn't know what he was up to till it was too late."

"And then you were afraid you might hurt him," she said, with cutting sarcasm, which reddened Ted's face. "If you don't have trouble with that it'll be a wonder."

"No danger of that. Here, Cap!" and he held out his arm to the dog. Captain looked at it a minute, then understood what was required of him, and, with a tenderness that was almost human, his tongue caressed the wound. Up and down, back and forth, from

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every conceivable angle, until the angry red left the wound and it felt soothed and cool. "That will do, old boy," and he patted the dog's head and rolled down the shirt sleeve again.

"Well, I've got to hurry, if I get home before dark," Nancy said. "I set out to look for old Brindle, but I guess I've missed her. She's likely home by now."

"That's how you happened to be down there, then?" jerking his thumb back over the trail.

"Yes. Did you see anything of Brindle as you came along?"

"No. She's not down the other side, or I'd 'a' heard her bell. I was over in the next gulch, fishin' in Bear Creek."

"That's so, too. You'd be sure to hear her sure," said Nancy, without looking at Ted.

"Say, you goin' straight home, Nancy?" Ted asked. "Perhaps you'd give those to mother as you pass? And I'll take the short cut through here to the lower pasture, and round up the sheep for the night."

"All right. I'll drop 'em in as I pass." She paused where another trail branched off down another gulch. Ted laid a hand on each of the girl's shoulders.

"Say, Nancy, you haven't forgot that you promised to be my girl?" Ted asked, gazing into the drooping dark eyes.

"No, I haven't; but I will, if you don't wallop that Mollen tribe good and plenty next time," she said.

Ted laughed. "It wasn't worth while, Nan." Then, growing very sober, his face puckering into a thoughtful frown, he said: "You see, it's like this, Nancy. I'm so blamed strong that I'm afraid of myself sometimes. If I was to let loose just a minute I might do something terrible, without intending to do it at all. I could have choked the life out of that Mose in a minute, but then I'd have to remember it all my life. I'd 'a' seen his mean, sneckin' face every dark night, when I'm out on the range alone. Do you catch what I'm driving at?" he asked.

"I know what you mean, and I'm glad you didn't do that. It would have been terrible to think of; but I can't, for the life of me, see how you kept from it. They are a mean, low-down tribe, and I hate them!" she cried, and her dark head drooped on Ted's shoulder.

"I'm glad you hate them, Nan, for I wouldn't have you love them for the world," he laughed. "But, honest, Nancy, I'm more afraid of myself than anything else living. If you're ever tempted to think me a coward, just remember that."

"I'll never think it again, Ted. I know you're not," raising her eyes to his honest blue ones, then dropping them in confusion. "I must hurry home or mother will be uneasy about me," she said hurriedly, trying to disengage herself from his arms.

"And I must hurry along, too, or mother will be uneasy about me," he laughed. "But I won't stir till you give me a kiss. There," the two red lips were lifted for the kiss. "All right, Captain, I'm going now," as the dog gravely touched his leg with one forepaw.

CHAPTER III.

IT IS August, and the sun has baked the hills a dull brown. The cattle and sheep are forced to the lowlands for food. Ted is busy all the day, looking after his sheep and cattle, and occasionally lending a helping hand to Uncle Edward, whose immense flocks range over thousands of acres. The cattle must be guarded closely, for rumors of cattle rustling have reached the neighborhood, and cattle men are alert and anxious.

In the little cabin on the side of Bear Ridge the inmates are early astir, and from the open door comes the odor of fried bacon. Mrs. Morgan, in a neat gingham house dress, is setting the table for breakfast. It is not the kind of breakfast you would order in a fashionable hotel or restaurant. There is plenty of bacon and eggs, and potatoes fried to a delicious brown, a generous plate of tempting toast, some rich, dark cake, with raisins and currants in it, the result of a cream cake left from the evening before, and a large glass dish filled with honey, fresh from the hive.

While breakfast is waiting for Ted Mrs. Morgan feeds the fowls. In a yard surrounded by a high fence are about several dozen beautiful White Leghorn pullets, their white bodies and red combs standing out boldly in the early morning sun. A cock crows a challenge and another answers him, while the hens utter their merry cackle. This bunch of white beauties are particularly valuable for their egg-producing qualities, the eggs of which go a long way towards stocking the tiny larder in the Morgan cabin. In another yard similarly constructed, is a bunch of big, clumsy Plymouth Rocks, kept especially for table use. The thoughts of fried chicken, and chicken pie caused Ted to be particularly fond of his bunch of feathered folk.

A beautiful white pigeon circles over the yard, with wistful eyes. Mrs. Morgan holds out her hand and calls: "Coo, coo! Coo, coo!" and the coaxing little creature lights on her hand for its accustomed grains of wheat.

Ted comes whistling around the corner of the barn, a brimming bucket of milk in one hand and an empty feed bucket in the other. Captain frisks up to Mrs. Morgan, and the white pigeon flies away in disgust.

"Is breakfast ready, mother?" Ted calls.

"Yes, son. Is your appetite ready?"

"Never was more so," he answered, and they both laughed.

Mrs. Morgan strained the milk into spotless pans while Ted was sousing his face in the wash basin in the kitchen. The light, fluffy hair was brushed carefully back, and he was ready to do justice to the appetizing breakfast his mother had prepared.

"Uncle Edward passed just now on his way to the lower range," Mrs. Morgan observed.

"Is that so?" Ted said, looking up from his plate of bacon and eggs. "He must have taken the notion rather sudden like?"

"Yes, he did. He said Sam came in last night with word that the stock is disappearing off the range."

"Rustlers getting busy, I suppose? They're beginnin' early this year. They don't generally start in till the heavy rains commence."

"Ted, dear, will you never stop dropping your g's?" Mrs. Morgan said, gently reproving.

"Oh, bother! No one remembers their g's up here. We're more interested in cattle and sheep—and rustlers."

"Very true, son, but you may not always live up here. You might find it convenient to remember your g's in the future. Form the habit now, and you will have it for future use."

"You're almost as squeamish about h's and r's and g's as old Silver is. He takes great pains to point out my mistakes. I said 'em' the other day when it should have been 'them' and it took him fully ten minutes to explain why I should never say 'em' again."

"I am very pleased to hear that, son. Any assistance in that direction is always welcome." Then, after a moment's thought, she said: "God knows, I can't blame you for your absurdities of speech, for good English is a rare thing up here. I have almost lapsed into the dialect of the hills myself."

"Say, mother, why not give Nancy a few hints about speaking correctly? She uses pretty tough grammar, you know," Ted said, without lifting his eyes from his plate.

"If you wish it, I will try to see what I can do. But Nancy is a spirited girl, and she might misunderstand my motive," and the mother sighed.

"I'm sure she'll be glad to have you help her, mother. Nancy is a good deal above the average girl up here, isn't she, mother?" he asked anxiously.

"Yes, Nancy is a bright girl. It's not ignorance with her so much as having fallen into the general habit of speech."

"That's it, mother." Ted cried. "I never thought of that before."

The meal was over, and Captain was patiently waiting at the door for his breakfast. A plate of scraps of meat and the remains of the fried potatoes were given him.

"If I am not home, you will find something left on the table for your lunch,"

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the mother explained to Ted. "There are a few herbs I must get while they are just right for curing, and I want to see how that patch of ginseng is coming on over in the timber. Uncle Edward says there's a nice bit of ginseng over beyond Ghost Hollow. But I'll have to leave that for some other day."

"You must have a stack of stuff on hand now, mother?"

"Yes, I have been extremely fortunate this year. I never did see such a quantity of wild herbs, such kinds of mosses and medicinal herbs. Then, I will be able to gather more ginseng this year than I have in the last seven years. Why, Ted, first thing I know, I'll be rich," and she laughed with the pure enjoyment of a girl.

"Can't I help you with something, mother? I hate to think of you out all day in the hot sun, diggin' weeds."

"There, you've dropped your 'g' again," the mother corrected. "Don't worry about me, son. I'd rather dig weeds, as you express it, than be the honored guest at a pink tea," she smiled. "You may put the saddle on Bessie and bring her to the door. You'll find my baskets in the herb house. You might strap them on for me."

"All right, mother," and he was turning away to do his bidding, when his mother called to him.

"Oh, Ted, Uncle Edward said you'd better look sharp after that bunch of steers that are down near the timber. He thought you ought to drive them up a bit."

"All right. I'll see to them first thing this morning. That bunch would make a mighty nice little haul for those thieving cattle men."

Captain came bounding after Ted, giving utterance to little, joyous yelps of pleasure, his great, bushy tail waving like a flag.

"We must tend to those steers right away, Captain. If anything should happen to that bunch, it's good-by to that new house mother has waited so many years for. Get out, you, Cap, old boy." And Captain looked up and wagged his tail knowingly.

Next week's Ledger will contain further chapters of this remarkable story. You will miss a great treat if you do not read it to the end. We will give you constantly the very best stories of entertainment that money will buy, so send in your subscription and take the Ledger regularly, if you are not doing so. You will not regret it.

* * *

The End of the World.

(Continued from page nineteen.)

no longer be referred to as Trouble Island.

The Spry Shark—nobody ever again called her the Coming Day—held her course and finally brought her inmates safely to the old port. Foskett, retiring from the sea, took possession of his home. Not to be outdone by an older man, Doctor Hanger took possession of Vashti, with her happy consent. It was a double wedding, for Sybil and Mate Dalton were married at the same time.

Jim Black was put under medical treatment, and soon regained his mental poise. He resumed his sea life, with Billy Sob in his watch. The latter, aided by Gideon, gave further attention to the debit and credit of his life, and the books being satisfactorily balanced by the doctor's skill, Billy lived on in deep content.

As long as he went to sea, he sailed in the old sloop, with Dalton as skipper, and the nimble heels of the celebrated vessel took them on many a prosperous voyage.

The End.

* * *

What She Really Wanted.

A lady in the county recently advertised in the local papers for a "handy man."

"What I want," she said to the first applicant, "is a man that will do odd jobs about the house, run errands, one that never answers back and is always ready to do what I want."

"Ah," said the applicant as he turned away, "it's a husband you're looking for, ma'am."

Spectacle Firm Makes Remarkable Offer.

A very unusual offer and one which will undoubtedly be of great interest to readers of the Chicago Ledger, whose eyes require the aid of glasses has been made by the St. Louis Spectacle House of St. Louis, Mo.

This well known firm which has fitted thousands of men and women with spectacles during the past year, will send a pair of gold filled spectacles fitted with perfect vision, accurately ground, lenses for either reading or distance vision, in a handsome black leatherette plush-lined, German Silver-tipped spectacle case, on 10 days trial to all bona fide spectacle wearers (no children) who send for them. See advertisement on page 17 or send your name and address, your age and how long you have been using spectacles to the St. Louis Spectacle House, St. Louis, Mo.—Adv.

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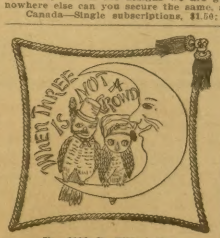

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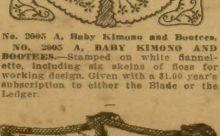
NO. 2923 B, TINTED PILLOW TOP.—On ecru art ticking, size 21x15 inches, including tan holland linene back and six skeins of colored floss. Given with a year's subscription to either the Blade or the Ledger for $1.00.



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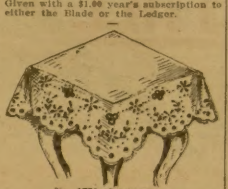

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